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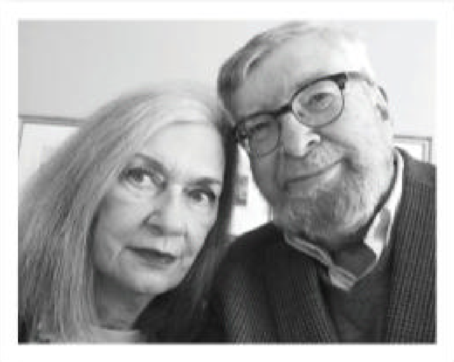
PHOTOGRAPHY, LAUREN KOLYN

SPOTLIGHT



Sandra Martin and Roger Hall have learned a great deal from travelling together for more than 50 years. Martin shares those lessons in "Roman Candles". A long-time obituary writer for the *Globe and Mail*, she is the author of several books, including *A Good Death: Making the Most of Our Final Choices* and *Working the Dead Beat: 50 Lives that Changed Canada.*

Rona Maynard is the author of *Starter Dog: My Path to Joy, Belonging and Loving This World* (April 2023, ECW Press) and a speaker on emotional health, which makes her the perfect writer for "Pet Cause". Formerly editor of *Chatelaine*, she is an avid art road-tripper and urban hiker in downtown Toronto, where she lives with her husband of more than 50 years and their rescue mutt, Casey, who is almost 10 but still a puppy at heart.

PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY SANDRA MARTIN; PETER BREGG (MAYNARD)

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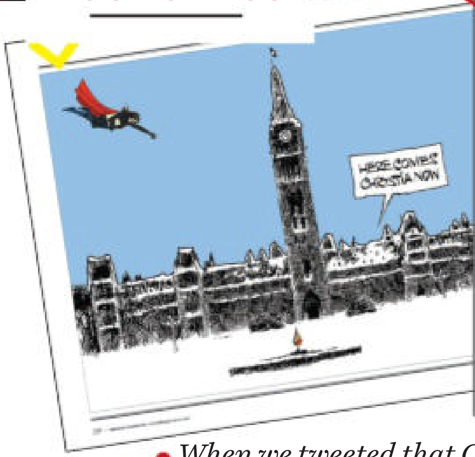
YOU TOLD US

TRIGGERED

Our cover of Finance and Deputy Minister Chrystia Freeland (Feb./Mar. 2023) generated a robust response from readers. Many of you told us that you loved Aislin's depiction of Freeland, praising it with terms like "so expressive," "a pleasure to view," "beautifully done," and "superb and classy." Others, however, disagreed, calling the cartoon a "silly caricature." And some suggested it wasn't appropriate to "endorse" political figures on the cover. Whatever your opinion, we are gratified by the feedback, all of which confirms that our readers remain feisty and engaged.

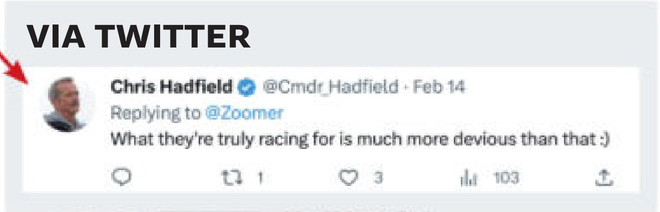


ZOOMER
THE COMING STORM • YOUR FINANCIAL FORECAST

Correction *An article that appeared in the Oct./Nov. 2022 issue with the headline "All Aboard" (pg. 76), stated that ME to WE Asset Holdings once controlled $40-million worth of property in downtown Toronto. Although ME to WE Asset Holdings owned some real estate, it was a matter of public record that WE Charity once controlled more than $40 million of property in Toronto. We regret the error.*

When we tweeted that Chris Hadfield's new book, The Apollo Murders, *deals with the "race to develop fighter jets," he posted this enigmatic reply.*

VIA TWITTER



Chris Hadfield @Cmdr_Hadfield · Feb 14
Replying to @Zoomer
What they're truly racing for is much more devious than that :)
1 3 103

A Toast to Family Diner

VIA FACEBOOK

Kate Young
I had many good lunches there!
1w

Cathy Chalmers
Love the Commodore, spent many a lunch hours & coffee breaks when I worked in the area. The Gee family are the best !!❤️
1w

Mary Stoll
Fantastic place .....great food great nostalgia
1w

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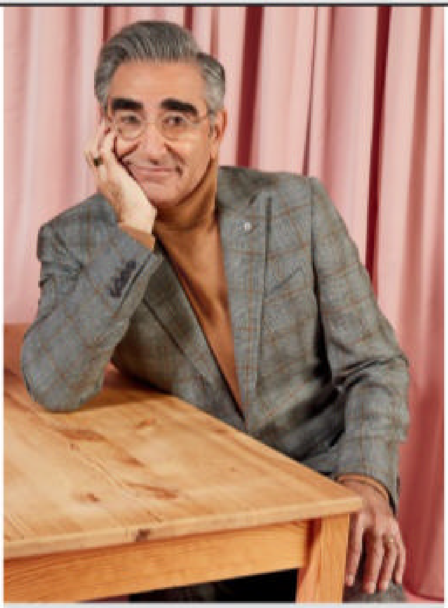
PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY OF DAVID GEE (DINER)

Johanna Schneller has seen every one of the Chris Guest/Eugene Levy movies about a hundred times, so talking to Eugene himself was a pleasure ("Eugene Levy Packs His Bags". A frequent *Zoomer* contributor, Schneller has profiled, among others, Emma Thompson, Billie Jean King and Sharon Stone (that last one went viral on Meryl Streep's birthday). Based in Toronto, she writes the weekly Bigger Picture column in the *Globe and Mail*, and is president of the Toronto Film Critics Association.



ON THE COVER
Eugene Levy was photographed by SATY + PRATHA on location at Neighborhood Studios, Toronto. Styling, Erica Cloud; on-set stylist, Cenk Papila, makeup, Lucky Bromhead; hair, Ana Sorys; set, Kristen Lim Tung; produced by Arthouse

ZOOMER

FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & PUBLISHER

IT WAS A SPECIAL WAY to cap off this year's International Women's Day. On March 8, I was invited by Tudor Alexis, the Consul General of France in Toronto, to see jazz singer Molly Johnson named Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres – the country's prestigious cultural honour. Those of you who read our cover profile of Johnson (Dec. 2021/Jan. 2022) know that her singular career has been defined by artistic achievement, as well as the activism and philanthropy remarked on by the French Ambassador to Canada, Michel Miraillet, before he pinned the order's green, white and silver medal on Johnson's Hoax Couture suit jacket. It gave it a jaunty pop.

I had met its designers, Jim Searle and Chris Tyrell – who have dressed Johnson for decades and who were also at the ceremony – just as they were starting their label, around the same time I met Johnson. It was the early- to mid-'80s, when a couple of blocks on and around Toronto's Queen Street West were the centre of the universe: where I lived, worked and played while I tried to "make it." Searle and I reminisced about the collision of art and culture that defined that bohemian time and place and set so many of us on our way. By night, I was the door- and coat-check girl at an after-hours nightclub, while by day I'd drag myself to the odd editorial meeting in a beer-soaked dive for a scrappy city magazine where I was lucky to be an intern. I would often bump into Johnson – who famously lived above the Cameron House bar in the neighbourhood– sporting a dramatic punk hairdo and wearing crinolines, handing out flyers promoting her first band, the rocking Alta Moda. And here we were, a mere four decades later, a chasm away in Rosedale, toasting her with the best champagne.

ZOOMER
Molly Johnson
[Inner] Peace & [Self] Love
The Secrets to Happiness

With Molly Johnson after she received her Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; Johnson's *Zoomer* cover

One of the satisfying things about getting older is that in the fullness of time, you gain perspective on what "making it" actually means. For me, it was living life on my own terms and leading three magazines thus far. For Brian D. Johnson, a frequent contributor who wrote "The Colour of Ink" in this issue, it meant discovering a passion for film that unfurled as a later-in-life career reinvention. For a group of Indigenous culinary visionaries, it could be that creating a conversation through traditional food and practices, described in "Roots of Identity," is just the beginning.

And for Molly Johnson, I think it's having remained authentically herself over the years. As the story "Face Value" explores, a lack of artifice is an uncommon, almost defiant thing these days. Here's to those who damn the torpedoes.

PHOTOGRAPHY, TANA D'AMICO (PORTRAIT); NICHOLAS MELLAMPHY (BOYD & JOHNSON)

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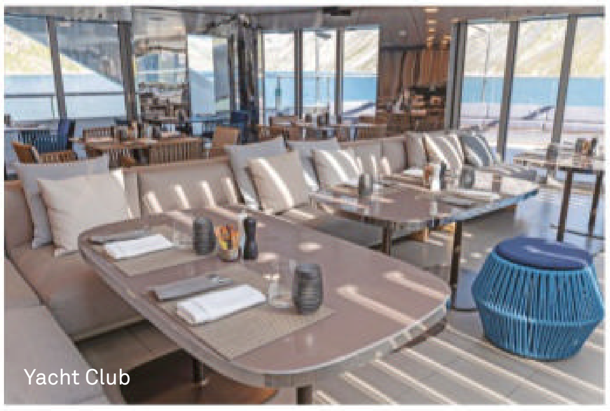
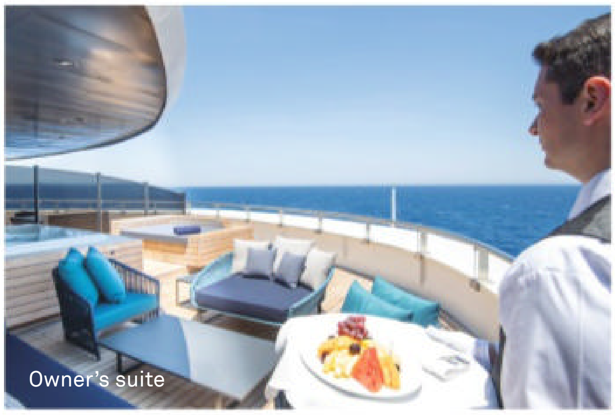

Yacht Club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THE UPS & DOWNS IN THE JOURNEY

UP

One more tug of the ear to mark a milestone When Carol Burnett (left) turns 90 on April 26, she'll be feted with a two-hour TV special that includes legends such as Julie Andrews and Cher.

Drexel University researchers in Pennsylvania say an artificial intelligence program much like ChatGPT – which replicates human conversation – may help with early detection of dementia The breakthrough came after the scientists spent hours giggling as ChatGPT wrote their study in the style of Dr. Seuss.

A wrinkle in time Research funded by the U.S. National Institute on Aging suggests cutting calories by just 12 per cent (240 from a 2,000-calorie-a-day diet) can delay the effects of aging and boost longevity.

From Grandmaster Flash to Queen Latifah, it's been a rapper's delight Hip-hop, which turns 50 this year, is being ➤

celebrated around the world, from the Grammy's 21-act tribute to the Juno celebration emceed by Kardinal Offishall. Back where it all began, in the Bronx, the Universal Hip Hop Museum is partnering with New York City on year-round events.

Meanwhile, grandmas are werk, werk, werking it on TikTok Residents at a Kentucky seniors home, who went viral with their interpretation of Rihanna's Super Bowl halftime performance of "Rude Boy," were surprised when both Rihanna (left) and her boss, rapper Jay-Z, sent bouquets of roses.

DOWN

A New York plastic surgeon, 82, declares too much long-distance running causes "gaunt, old face" At which point, marathon organizers asked him to please stop yelling at racers on the course.

Maybe they're just on Ozempic? One of the side effects of the diabetes drug, which many are using as a quick fix for weight loss, is a deflated, saggy face, which left one user looking "exhausted and old." *–Mike Crisolago*

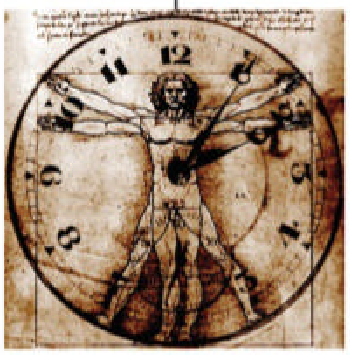
DON'T TRUST ANYONE UNDER 30

The rise and fall of the "Crypto Bros"

The sun may finally be setting on the Wild West era of cryptocurrency trading. That's if new measures announced in February by the securities watchdogs successfully curtail the notorious under-30 "crypto bros" who thrive in the unregulated environment. Last September, investigators accused Aiden Pleterski, 24, of Whitby, Ont., of using investors' money to fund his lavish lifestyle, including his fleet of sports cars. This follows the bizarre tale of Belleville, Ont., native Gerald Cotten, who managed to build his Quadriga into Canada's largest crypto exchange, before dying in unusual circumstances at the age of 30 in 2018 and taking passcodes to access $250 million of virtual money to his grave. But these two were mere juvenile delinquents compared to Sam Bankman-Fried of Stanford, Calif., the 31-year-old whiz kid who convinced athletes and celebrities to invest in his FTX crypto exchange. Bankman-Fried, who often played video games during investor meetings, built his net worth to US$26 billion but now faces up to 115 years in prison on charges that he funnelled money from his clients to buy luxury real estate and make political donations. The volatile nature of the cryptocurrency market – which lost US$2 trillion in 2022 – and the unruly kids causing all this anarchy, leave many older investors leery. Charlie Munger, 99, right-hand man to financial-guru-to-the-boomers Warren Buffet, once compared cryptocurrency to "rat poison" and "venereal disease." Buffett, 92, (above) has predicted that most cryptocurrencies will "come to a bad ending," while economist Nouriel Roubini, 65, feels it's time to crack down on the "crooks, criminals, con men and carnival barkers," who preside over an "ecosystem that is totally corrupt." New Canadian rules will compel all crypto companies to register with provincial security regulators and put in stiffer measures to protect investors. *—Peter Muggeridge*

FOREVER YOUNG

SILICON VALLEY ENTREPRENEUR BRYAN JOHNSON LOOKS LIKE A MILLION BUCKS – for his age. Better make that two million, which is the amount the 45-year-old billionaire spends each year on his pursuit of perpetual youth, a dream he's chasing along with other big-tech anti-aging companies like Calico Labs (Google) and Altos Labs (reportedly backed by Jeff Bezos). Johnson is trying to figure out the formula for staying young - experimenting with vitamins, supplements, diagnostic equipment and workout machines and employing a team of 30 health-care professionals who constantly monitor his vital signs. "Can somebody who's willing to say yes to an algorithm, like myself, stay the same age biologically?" asks Johnson. The answer is playing out live on *bryanjohnson.co*. *–PM*



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GORD DOWNIE'S VOICE SOARS AGAIN

GORD DOWNIE — BOB ROCK
LUSTRE PARFAIT

Producer Bob Rock releases a "lasting memory" of their friendship

Bittersweet is not a word typically used to describe rock albums. Yet *Lustre Parfait* - a collaboration between late singer-lyricist Gord Downie (above) and Canuck super-producer and musician Bob Rock (below) is as poignant as it is grandiose.

As Rock explains in an interview from L.A., after the pair had cut The Tragically Hip's *We Are the Same* in 2009, Downie asked Rock if he had any stray music he could write lyrics for. Rock had plenty, dating back decades, since he's also a distinguished songwriter. They began collaborating in 2010, grabbing recording time in various locales when packed schedules permitted. There seemed to be no rush; Rock says the sessions were joyful and liberating. Then Downie died in 2017 at age 53.

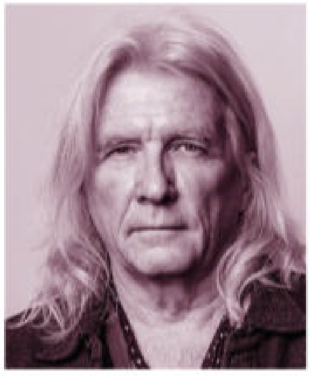
Lustre Parfait (May 5), which Rock describes as a musical manifestation of a close friendship, and the most meaningful thing he has ever worked on, sat in limbo as the Winnipeg-born, Maui-based producer managed his grief. "I had to go away for a while," says Rock, who turns 69 in April. "Before he passed, Gord said to me, 'Promise you'll finish this and people will hear it.' After three or four years, I finally realized I could."

The dynamic album features Downie's vocals in a mix that includes horns, keyboards, guitars, bass and a roster of marquee drummers, from The Hip's Johnny Fay to Paul McCartney sidekick Abe Laboriel Jr.

While Rock, who has also worked with Metallica, Bryan Adams and Michael Bublé, notes most of Downie's impressionistic lyrics were written before his brain cancer diagnosis in 2015, many scan as prophetic, especially in the seven-plus-minute opus "The Moment Is a Wild Place," in which he implores listeners to "just live in the moment."

"That song drove me to tears," Rock says. "I'm still floored by it.

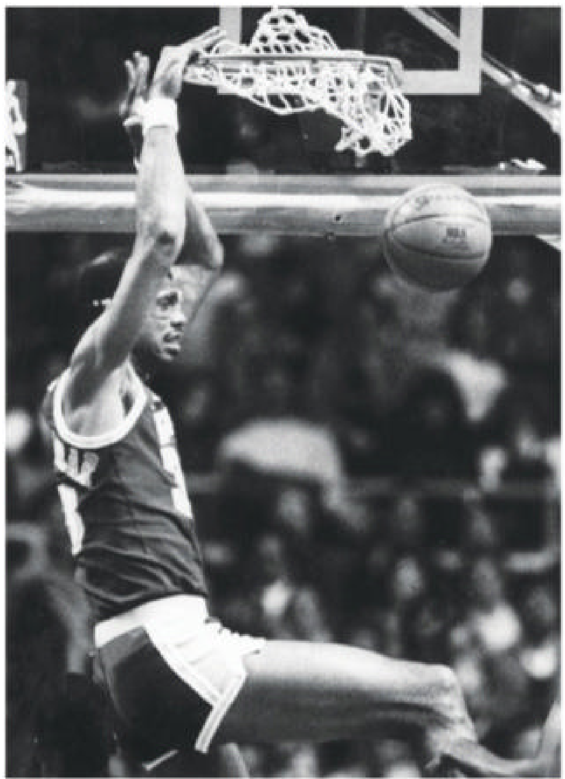
"I've been very blessed to work with great artists. But this is so special because Gord was so special. Obviously, this can never happen again. "These songs are a lasting memory of our friendship. They will always move me." *–Kim Hughes*



For more, visit **everythingzoomer.com/interview-bob-rock**

SLAM DUNK

WHEN L.A. LAKERS SUPERSTAR LeBron James (above) soared past **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar** (below) in February, to become the NBA's all-time scoring leader, sports pundits began arguing over whether he was the greatest of all time, basketball edition. These G.O.A.T. debates rage in every sport, especially on social media where hockey devotees will give you 99 reasons why Wayne Gretzky is their god while baseball can't seem to decide between Babe Ruth, Willie Mays or Barry Bonds. This might be the golden age of G.O.A.T.s with all-timers LeBron in basketball, Tom Brady in football, Tiger Woods in golf and Serena Williams in tennis reaching most-revered status. This raises the inevitable question: Which athlete is the undisputed, generation-spanning G.O.A.T. of all G.O.A.T.s? The obvious answer is boxer Muhammad Ali, who not only won the heavyweight title three times and was a civil rights warrior, but was also the athlete-celebrity-icon for whom the phrase was coined. *–Peter Muggeridge*



PHOTOGRAPHY, PHOTO BY PHILLIP CHIN/WIREIMAGE (DOWNIE); NATHANIEL S. BUTLER/NBAE VIA GETTY IMAGES (JAMES); STAN GROSSFELD/THE BOSTON GLOBE VIA GETTY IMAGES (JABBAR); AUSTIN NELSON (BOB ROCK PORTRAIT)

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FINDING RAQUEL

Raquel Welch in *Myra Breckinridge*, 1970; with Miss Piggy, 1978

When Raquel Welch appeared on *The Muppet Show*, of all places, her honest and playfully subversive performance satirized – and ultimately embraced – her status as a sex symbol.

The *Fantastic Voyage* star, who died Feb. 15 at 82, was struggling to get away from playing scantily clad bombshells. In that November 1978 *Muppet* episode, Welch tries to change her image, so she dresses like Diane Keaton, rehearses Shakespeare and sings “I Am a Woman” with Miss Piggy, reprising the duet she famously performed alongside Cher a few years earlier. But Welch also plays into the fantasies that Hollywood producers, and adolescent boys always projected onto her. She has a sexy dance number with a giant Muppet spider, a nod to her breakthrough role as a nearly voiceless cavewoman in the riotous 1966 B-movie *One Million Years B.C.* In another bit, she serenades Fozzie Bear with a sensual performance of “Confide in Me,” while the iconic poster for *One Million Years*, with an Amazonian-looking Welch in a fur bikini, hangs in the background. Muppet tongues were left wagging.

The episode captures how Welch – who had an elegant bone structure, bronzed tone and overall vibe that fell somewhere between Sophia Loren and Cindy Crawford – was always more talented and self-aware than her image would allow. Her gutsy performance as a transgender woman in 1970s *Myra Breckinridge*, a critical and box office bomb, didn’t change the trajectory of her career, and she went on to star in *Hannie Caulder*, *The Three Musketeers* and the 1981 Broadway show *Woman of the Year* that exercised her dramatic, musical and comedic chops while leaning into her sultry good looks.

Fighting her sexpot appeal was futile, so she had fun with it instead, using her talents and wit to reveal more of who she was on *The Muppet Show*, *Mork & Mindy* – where she played a dominatrix space invader – or *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*, where she regularly flipped conversations about her looks into something more elevated and observational. Meanwhile, she banked on her aesthetic appeal to succeed as an entrepreneur, selling her own wig line and jumping on the ’80s workout video craze alongside contemporaries like Jane Fonda.

Welch’s refusal to be hemmed in by desirability made her more than just a pin-up; she was a complicated feminist icon for generations weaned on sultry B-movies and *The Muppet Show*. —*Radheyan Simonpillai*

PAINFUL PRANK

On April Fool’s Day, the federal carbon tax increases from $50 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions to $65 per tonne. The Canadian Taxpayers Federation says the hike will ***ADD 14 CENTS PER LITRE*** *to the price of gasoline and* ***12 CENTS PER CUBIC METRE*** *of natural gas. –Peter Muggeridge*

PHOTOGRAPHY, BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES (WELCH); TV TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES (WELCH WITH MISS PIGGY); SUPACHAI/ADOBE STOCK (GAS PUMP)

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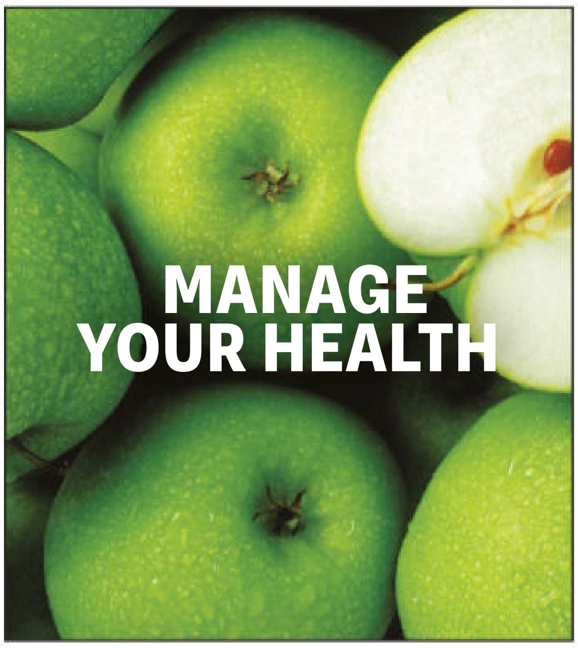
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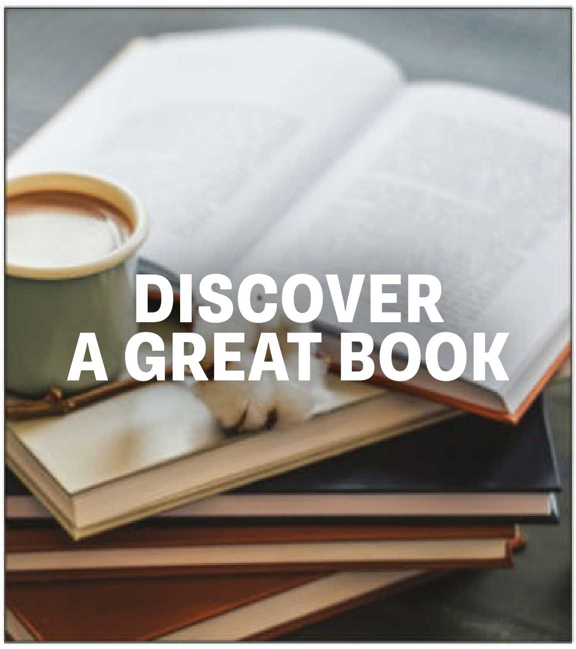
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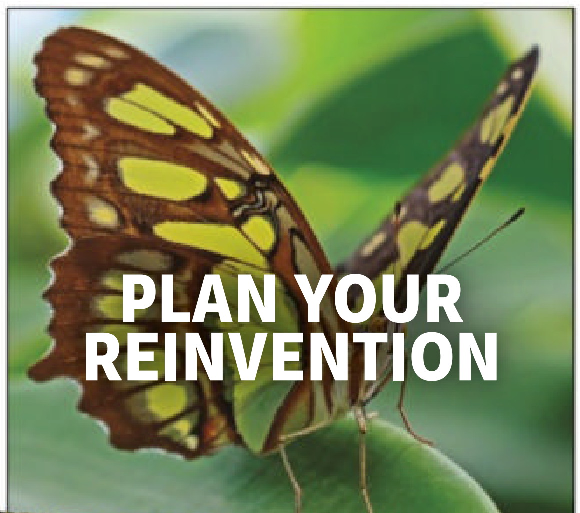
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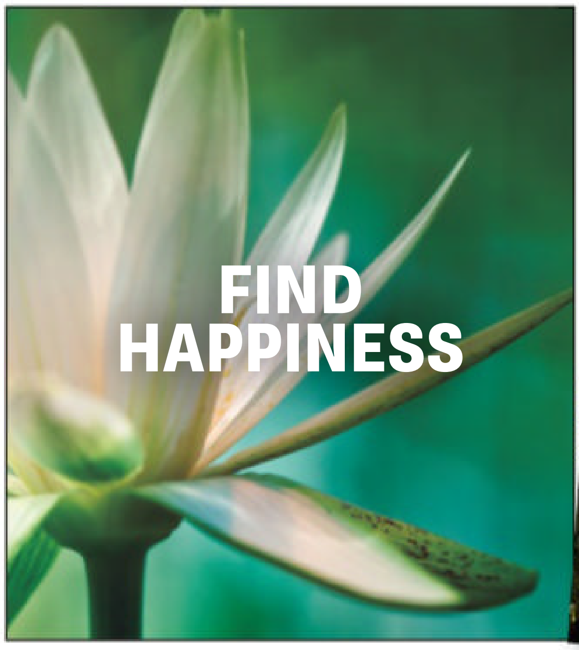
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STILL YOUNG & RESTLESS

As the soap opera known as *Y&R* celebrates its 50th season, we tune in

The Young and the Restless, one of three daytime soap operas still on the air, celebrated its 50th season in March. The potboiler, known as *Y&R*, is set in the fictional Genoa City, a place with an unusual number of internationally prominent billionaires, and tells the tales of two feuding families, the Abbotts and the Newmans. The ultimate power couple – Victor and Nikki Newman (played by Eric Braeden and Melody Thomas Scott) – have been married to each other four times since Victor found his love in a strip club. But since weddings are the lifeblood of a soap, these two have walked many aisles since the show debuted in 1973: Nikki has had 11 rings placed on her finger; Victor has worn 14.

Thomas Scott has some thoughts about why the Nikki-and-Victor love story has endured through the ups and downs and divorce decrees. "Opposites attracting was probably the first reason, but then the story became multi-layered with the *My Fair Lady* aspect," she said in an email from Los Angeles, referring to Nikki's transformation. "God knows, she was a bit of a mess, uneducated and clueless to the finer things in life. His slowly teaching her, tutoring her, and eventually wooing her became a fascinating process to watch. And then came the most important thing, chemistry."

The thing about soaps is they provide comfort and continuity. You visit the same homes and see the same characters each day, and are submersed in the cathartic cycles of mundane drama – adultery, friend squabbles, corporate backstabbing – and intense histrionics, from traumatic brain injuries (and amnesia, a plot twist with mucho dramatic possibility) to baby-switching schemes, boffo explosions, disappearances in volcanoes and being buried alive. (This was the plotline ➤

A DRACULA FOR EVERY DECADE

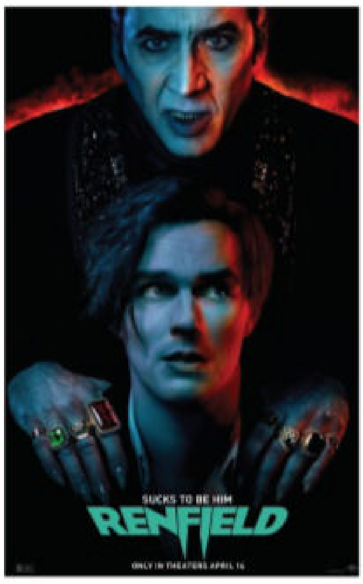
Is anything in cinema as evergreen as bloodsucking? Google "movies about vampires" and prepare for staggering returns with endless subgenres. Teen vampires! Lesbian vampires! Hipster vampires! The latest addition to the canon is horror comedy *Renfield* (April 14), with Nicholas Hoult as Dracula's long-suffering aide seeking some work-life balance. In this COVID-19 climate, it's a perfect metaphor for the work-from-home versus in-office conundrum. Nicolas Cage plays the menacing boss, an encore of sorts to his role in 1988's *Vampire's Kiss*. If you're a sucker for Dracula fare, here's a list of movies to really sink your teeth into.

2010s: *Only Lovers Left Alive* (2013). In *Politico*, historian Vanessa Walker says the decade marked "the end of privacy," and nothing kills a romantic vibe like the sudden arrival of a pesky kid sister as estranged married vampires (Tilda Swinton and Tom Hiddleston) try to reconnect in Jim Jarmusch's stylish thriller.

2000s: *Let the Right One In* (2008). Vampiric Swedish children call the shots, surely the inevitable backlash to helicopter parenting.

1990s: *Interview with the Vampire* (1994). It's fitting that a decade as loopy as the '90s – with high-fashion flannel and Madonna making trance music – would feature Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt, Hollywood's most bankable stars, pirouetting around New Orleans in frilly white shirts and, for Cruise, a blond wig.

1980s: *The Hunger* (1983). Just in case Goths missed the memo, the opening scene ➤



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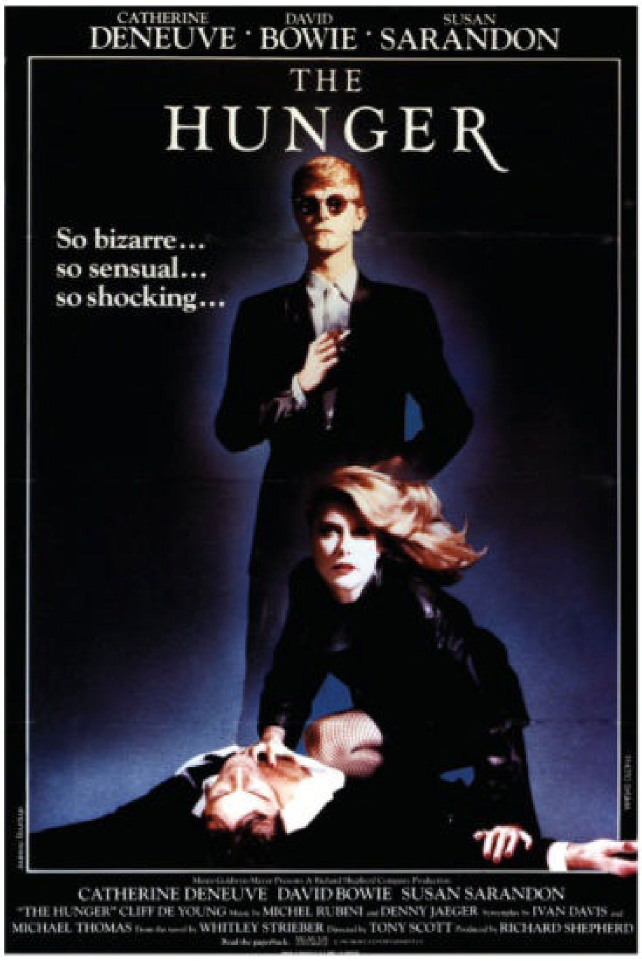
Time is mutable on soaps: Things move both slowly, as characters chew the scenery in a hypnotic loop, and swiftly. When the shows need fresh faces, babies grow up seemingly overnight in what is known as SORAS, or “soap opera rapid aging syndrome.”

Soaps were always ahead of their time, quietly subversive in introducing once-taboo subjects into the conversation. *Y&R* has tackled alcoholism, AIDS, sexual harassment, breast cancer, eating disorders and, more recently, cyberbullying on FacePlace – the stand-in for Facebook – but interestingly, there are few laptops, tablets or smartphones to be seen. As the suds keep on flying, it feels like a throwback to a time when we hashed things out in person.

The genre began on the radio in the 1930s, moving to television in the 1940s. There were once 25 radio soaps and, at the height of TV soapdom in 1970, there were 19 shows on the air. *Y&R* has returned to its roots, with the audio now available as an Apple podcast. It also had a post-modern crossover when cast member Eileen Davidson (who plays Ashley Abbott) appeared simultaneously on Bravo’s *The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills* from 2014 to 2017.

Eric Braeden (as Victor Newman) and Melody Thomas Scott (as Nikki Reed), 1984

Indeed, the *Real Housewives* franchise has replaced the soap opera – so named because the daytime TV fodder for actual housewives was once sponsored by soap and detergent companies – as the destination for treachery and skulduggery, bad behaviour and yes, catharsis, as we watch egos explode (from a safe distance). Compared to *Housewives*, *Y&R* is almost genteel in its approach; even the villains have soft spots to mine. Thomas Scott credits the show’s longevity to its creators and the enduring personalities that sprang from their pens. “While other daytime serials have gone off the air, *Y&R* has thrived thanks to the genius of [the late] Bill and Lee Bell. They created strong characters that are still on the show, driving the storyline.” –*Leanne Delap*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“THE HUNGER” CLIFF DE YOUNG MICHEL RUBINI DENNY JAEGER IVAN DAVIS MICHAEL THOMAS WHITLEY STRIEBER TONY SCOTT RICHARD SHEPHERD

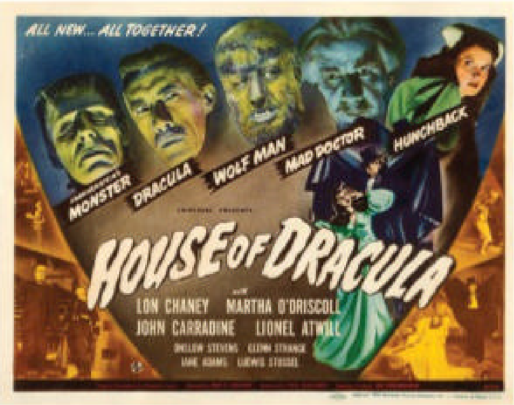
features Bauhaus performing “Bela Lugosi’s Dead” in a dingy nightclub. The erotic horror film, which became a cult favourite and fashion reference, starred rocker David Bowie and French actress Catherine Deneuve as a vampire couple in a love triangle with a sleep researcher, played by Susan Sarandon.

1970s: *The Night Stalker* (1972). This ratings-busting ABC Movie of the Week about Carl Kolchak, a rumpled, wise-cracking reporter trailing a bloodsucker through Vegas, came out the year after dishevelled gonzo journalist Hunter S. Thompson chased the elusive American dream in *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*.

1960s: *The Fearless Vampire Killers* (1967). Best remembered as the project where Roman Polanski met his future wife, actor Sharon Tate, this British hor-com was set “deep in the heart of Transylvania,” referencing Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* locale and reinforcing the beleaguered Romanian region as the original home of bloodlusting killers.

1950s: *Horror of Dracula* (1958). Christopher Lee was arguably the first sexy Dracula. This being the ’50s, no one talked about the soft porn, but everyone could see it just the same.

1940s: *House of Dracula* (1945). Tyrannical monster men (Count Dracula, Wolfman, Frankenstein) evoke Second World War man monsters (Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin).



1930s: *Dracula* (1931). Tod Browning’s film sealed Bela Lugosi’s fate as a horror-film actor, and almost every Dracula that followed (including *Sesame Street*’s Count) copied his Hungarian accent.

1920s: *Nosferatu* (1922). This silent German horror movie, which F. W. Murnau based on Stoker’s 1897 novel, was ostensibly conceived after the director claimed that, during the First World War, a Serbian peasant told him he saw a real undead vampire in Romania. –*Kim Hughes*

PHOTOGRAPHY, CBS VIA GETTY IMAGES (THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS CAST); PICTORIAL PRESS LTD/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (THE HUNGER); PICTURELUX/THE HOLLYWOOD ARCHIVE/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (HOUSE OF DRACULA)

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CHARLES IN CHARGE

The King embraces his role as he finally wears the crown

It is not the best of times for a coronation, (Charles's takes place on May 6) with the British economy at a nadir and King Charles III's subjects feeling the pinch from tax hikes and rising heating bills and food costs. But the House of Windsor is entwined with dynasties that have handed down the Crown for more than 1,000 years, and these trials are piddly compared to the War of the Roses, which burned down the House of Plantagenet, and the subsequent Tudor reign of terror, marked by King Henry VIII's predilection for beheadings.

The modern-day monarchy has always provided cheer and a cultural point of pride to rally around in times of strife, so the House of Windsor – which, in the '90s, endured the Queen's *annus horribilis* and the Charles and Diana rift dubbed the War of the Wales – will likely survive a TV show or two and a tell-all book by a second son.

The ceremony is a big deal, but what matters the most is that Charles is doing surprisingly well in his new role. After the flurry of fussy moments during his proclamation as King – remember the tussles with pens? – he has settled into the top job with notable ease. He has a grandfatherly air and has been laughing with crowds, with real warmth radiating from both sides of the rope line. He's kept his cool when eggs were thrown at his head. He's even received a couple of hugs, formerly the territory of the Dianas and the Meghans of the royal fold. Most importantly, he has engendered loyalty within the ranks: The Royal Family, senior and otherwise, held a stoic line of silence after the Sussex revelations. It did indeed strangle the oxygen of the gossip fire.

A reckoning will follow the lift provided by the coronation's festive spirit. If Charles wants to make his mark, pundits say he must move swiftly. There has been a flurry of royal books released after Elizabeth II died in September and the accession of Charles III. In interviews with *Zoomer*, the authors shared their thoughts on Charles' chances.

In January, *The Times of London* royal reporter Valentine Low published *Courtiers*, the story of the men in grey suits behind the curtains at Buckingham Palace. He says when Charles was Prince of Wales, his household could be akin to *Wolf Hall* (the Hilary Mantel novel about Henry VIII's courtier, Thomas Cromwell) in terms of power games, but he was actually very good at getting things done, a skill that bodes well for the future. We have already seen this with swift and decisive decisions around family matters and coronation plans. This skill was developed in the years where Charles' household was facing off with the Queen's household in the '90s. "Charles was also often at odds with Buckingham Palace," says Low. "There were very concrete issues of power and influence and strategy that needed to be resolved." Now that he holds the top job, he will see the view from the other side.

➤

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Grandma Droniak (7 million followers) and Grandpa Chan (2.5 million followers) are more than simply TikTok sensations. These "granfluencers" are also leading a growing movement against ageism on social media, according to a recent study in the U.K.-based The Gerontologist *called* Not Too Old for TikTok: How Older Adults Are Reframing Aging. *The researchers discovered a "powerful countercultural phenomenon" of older TikTokers who are upending negative stereotypes online "by embracing or even celebrating their aged status." –Peter Muggeridge*

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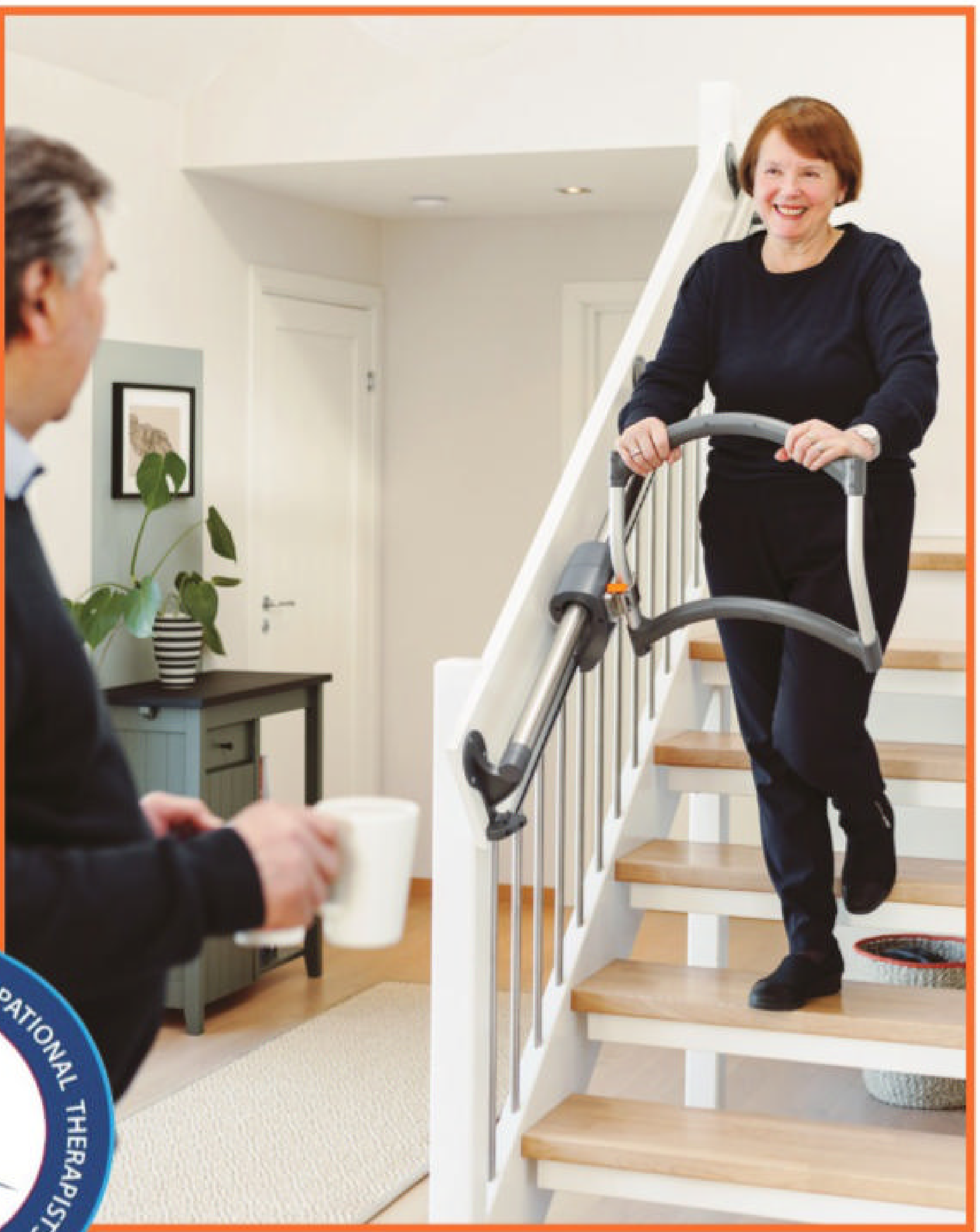

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Christopher Andersen, author of *The King*, published during Charles' first months on the throne, calls the new King "unknowable and an enigma." This is in contrast to those who say his life has been lived too out loud, his inner thoughts overexposed to biographers. "Charles is to some extent unsure of himself, and we can see it," says Andersen. "He is full of contrasts and contradictions – a work in progress." Until he married Camilla in 2005 – a faithful, and very behind-the-scenes mate – Charles was overshadowed by the women in his life, particularly Diana. "Over the years, Charles has frequently asked, 'Why don't they love me the way they love her?'" After her death, Charles could have been talking about his mother. "He wants his subjects not merely to respect him, but to feel that same intangible sense of warmth and affection coming in waves at him from the British people – the same warmth and affection that washed over the Queen during her 70 years on the throne."

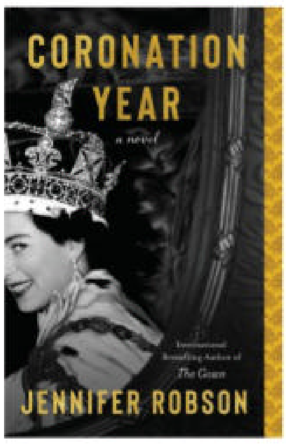
King Charles III and Camilla, Queen Consort

Overriding all of this, Andersen says, is Charles' keen sense of history and his place in it. "He sits at the top of a system that has existed for over a thousand years. He is intensely aware of that, but also of how precarious his position is. If the monarchy survives and flourishes, it will be because of Charles III. If it crashed and burns, it will be because of Charles III."

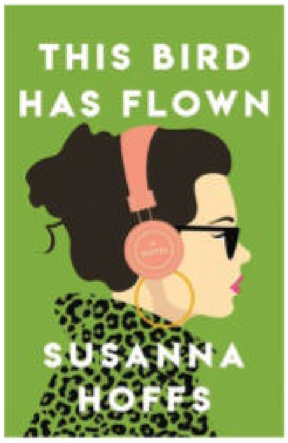
Lastly, we have celebrity analyst Andrew Morton, who himself has been woven into the story of the past 40 years of royal drama. As Diana's unofficial/official biographer, he has a remarkably warm view of the new King. Making the rounds to promote his book, *The Queen*, published just after Elizabeth II died, Morton said Charles "seems very much in control. He is also very much in his honeymoon period." This juncture, at the transfer of power, he concludes, is "quite profound. After the Queen is gone, it is not as stable." It is now up to Charles to steady things. —*Leanne Delap*

HOT OFF THE PRESS …

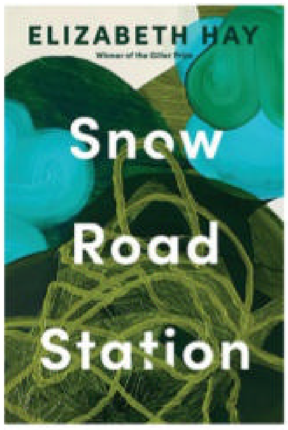
FIVE BOOKS WE CAN'T WAIT TO READ



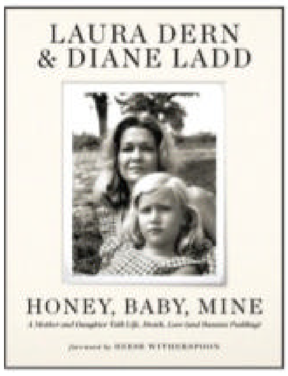
1 CORONATION YEAR By Jennifer Robson > A struggling London hotelier hopes the Blue Lion's fortunes will be reversed when Queen Elizabeth II's coronation procession passes its doorstep in June 1953, but someone wants to hasten its demise in this mystery, wrapped in a romance or two, from the bestselling Canadian author, 53, of *The Gown*. (April 4)



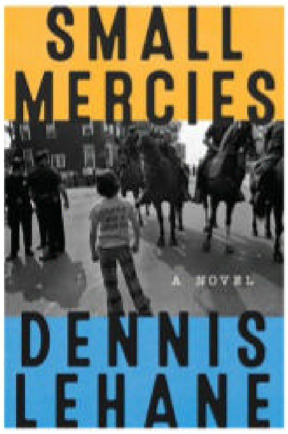
2 THIS BIRD HAS FLOWN By Susanna Hoffs > A rock 'n' roll rom-com, from the 64-year-old songwriter and co-founder of American pop band The Bangles, features Jane, a one-hit wonder with writer's block and stage fright, and Tom, a handsome Oxford professor she meets on a plane to London. Cue a redemptive tale full of secrets and lots of inside baseball about the music industry. (April 4)



3 SNOW ROAD STATION By Elizabeth Hay > The Giller Prize-winning Canadian author writes a stand-alone novel about two characters from 2016's *His Whole Life*, with Lulu Blake, a still sexy, 60-something actor retreating to the titular small Ontario town with her old friend Nan, where they reckon with impending old age, crushed dreams and messy feelings. (April 11)



4 HONEY, BABY, MINE By Diane Ladd and Laura Dern > When Ladd, 87, was diagnosed in 2018 with pneumonia and given six months to live, doctors recommended exercise to improve her breathing. Dern, 56, took her mother on walks, where she distracted Ladd with questions about her life. This memoir sets down their conversations about love, ambition and their distinguished Hollywood acting careers. Ladd beat the odds and recovered, but their poignant reflections encourage us to connect with loved ones before it's too late. (April 25)



5 SMALL MERCIES By Dennis Lehane > The Edgar-winning author of 14 novels (*Mystic River*, *Gone Baby Gone*) sets his latest thriller in his hometown of Boston during the summer of 1974, when opposition to the desegregation of public schools erupted into protests and riots. Lehane, 57, has said this book about the dark heart of American racism may be his last. (April 25) –*Kim Honey*

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SPRING FORWARD

Five steps for decluttering your closet and updating your style

// BY VIIA BEAUMANIS //

In an era of online shopping and fast fashion, it's astonishing how much we mindlessly accumulate over the years, much of which we hardly wear, used to wear or have subjected to enough wear and tear. Unless you're blessed with vast walk-in closets, sometimes more is just more, and many garments languish in closets and dressers, eating up valuable storage space and making it harder to get dressed, given all you have to riffle through.

Let's get your closets up to speed with wardrobe tweaks, organizing techniques and resale boutiques.

↗ THE PURGE

Sort items into four categories: keep, repair, donate or toss. Immediately bag items destined for the trash or donation, getting everything that you're eliminating out of the way.

You can't do better than the trusty old Salvation Army. One of Canada's largest textile recyclers, it offers employment and affordable merchandise in its thrift shops and publishes comprehensive annual impact reports detailing its very worthy endeavours, from feeding the poor and sheltering the homeless to combating human trafficking and providing emergency disaster relief. Another excellent option is finding a local association that provides clothing to the disadvantaged such as Toronto-based GLOW (Gently Loved Outfits to Wear), the city's largest clothing bank, which stocks free apparel in a dignified retail shopping environment. Conveniently, Diabetes Canada offers free pickup for "gently used" clothing and earmarks the profits for research, education, programs, services and advocacy.

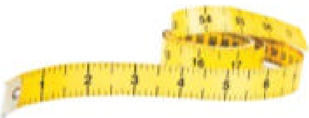
If you want to clear out higher-end, designer items, select an online resale site, and skip the 40 per cent commission routinely charged by consignment shops.

Poshmark takes a 20 per cent cut on sales of $15 or more (and a flat fee of $2.95 on those under $15) and allows you to upload items into one grouped sale that you can announce and share with a link on your social media channels. Vestiaire Collective divides your goods into their categories – designer, bags, vintage, etc. – and takes as little as 15 per cent. They both allow you to upload your own photos and to handle your listing. When your item sells on Vestiaire, you ship it to them for free and they forward it to the buyer in their packaging. Poshmark sends you a pre-addressed, prepaid shipping label via email and you package the item and send it off.

On the other hand, selling goods with The RealReal means booking a "virtual consignment appointment" to video chat with a "luxury manager" about pricing or shipping (with free UPS pickup). The company will then evaluate, authenticate, photograph, price and sell your items for a commission ranging from 20 to 70 per cent, depending on the sale price.

↗ THE EDIT

Back to the closet. It's helpful to have a collapsible rolling rack on hand so you can take everything out of the closet and hang it neatly – instead of piling it all on the bed – then decide what to put back in, as well as give your closet a deep clean. Plus, if you're selling some of it online, you can keep that stash separated until it's sold, instead of having it take up space in your newly edited closet. It's hard. We all love things we haven't worn in years but have sentimental attachment to.

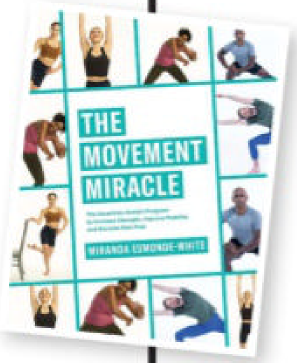


Start with the easy stuff:

- Clothes that don't fit: If you're a long-time size 10, be realistic. That size 6 or 8 dress that looked great on you then is not going to fit now.

BODY

EASY DOES IT



In her latest book, *The Movement Miracle* (published March 14), Miranda Esmonde-White promotes, in equal measure, stretching and strengthening to help take us back to the point, when, she tells me, "we never second-guessed the state of our body in terms of what we can and can't do." We don't need to feel the burn to achieve that end. Rather, says the Montreal-based fitness trainer, who turns 74 in May, a regimen of slow- to medium-paced movements done 25 minutes a day is enough to "rebalance" muscles and joints, and enhance functional mobility – which, she points out, we need for everything from reaching into high and low cupboards to putting on our shoes.

A classically trained ballerina (and National Ballet of Canada alum), Esmonde-White has spent her second act hosting her long-running PBS fitness show, *Classical Stretch*, authoring books on healthy aging and "developing and perfecting" her gentle fitness routine. It emphasizes slow, controlled movements (think tai chi) and incorporates eccentric training, which focuses on lengthening activated muscles (think lowering a weight versus lifting it) and has been shown more effective at building muscle. It can also help you improve head, neck and back alignment, as well as feet positioning – a key "for older adults to avoid poor posture," she explains. Try this exercise: Raise your arms above your head, keeping them beside your ears. Relax your shoulders and lift your arms higher. Hold for four seconds. *–Tara Losinski*

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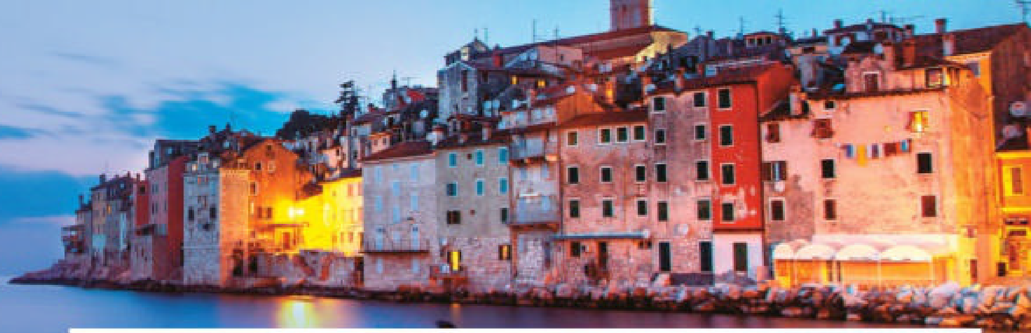

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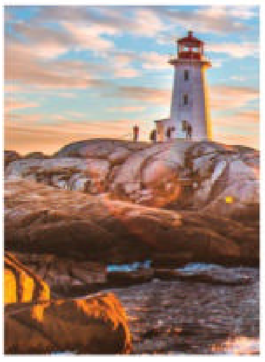

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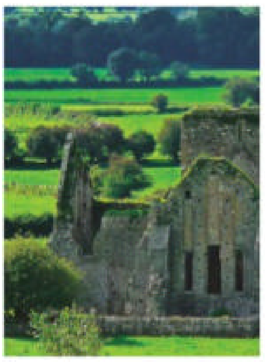

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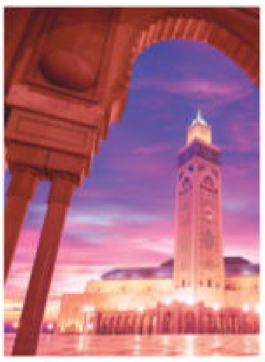

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Senior Discovery Tours

- Cuts that don't compliment: skirts that are too short, sleeveless pieces you never wear because you're self-conscious about your upper arms and the low-rise trousers that are muffin-top inducing.
- Impulse buys: anything that still has the tag on it or arrived from the internet and didn't quite work once you tried it on, but you never bothered returning; that formal dress you snapped up in a last-minute shopping frenzy before a big event – and never wore again.
- Prints, patterns, colours: Is that outsize Ikat print frock or those polka-dot capri pants really you? Do you ever wear orange, no matter how nice that shirtdress is? If you love animal prints, give them a once-over and only keep the winners. Good leopard needs a beige, not brassy, tone. Keep the zebra kaftan (a forever boho classic), but consider ditching the blazer (a dated relic).
- Repair, really? Set aside anything you love that needs a new zipper, button or hem, and decide whether anything more complicated than darning is worth it.

↗ HANGERS & ORGANIZERS

They should all match. This instantly gives your closet an orderly, visually appealing look. Wooden hangers are nice, but they're also bulky, so, unless you have ample space, they're best reserved for the heavier items in your coat closet. Thin, velvet hangers are inexpensive, fit twice as many garments into any closet and their texture keeps even the strappiest, slinkiest garment from falling off. You'll save more space if you use shower-curtain rings to store several slim items (scarves, tank tops, camisoles, belts) on a single hanger. Arrange clothing by colour or type. If you tend to wear few colours, you may want to add rack separators to distinguish black trousers from black skirts and black jackets. If you have shelves, clear pop-in dividers help to keep things tidy.

Adjustable Plexiglas dividers keep piles of folded clothes neat, while drawer inserts sort socks, hosiery, knickers and soft bras. Jewelry organizers with individual compartments save bijoux fans from detangling chains or trawling through jumbled boxes.

↗ BINS & BASKETS

You're more likely to return items to their designated spots if they have designated spots. Keep smaller items like belts, hats, gloves and scarves in bins and baskets. Label bins on upper shelves so you know what's in them without having to take them down. Store bulky items in bins on the floor. If you have vertical space to stack them, buy lidded bins. Like your hangers, all of your bins and baskets should match, or at least co-ordinate, for eye-pleasing continuity.

↗ SHOES AND BOOTS

Shoes stored in a pile on the closet floor are a hassle to sort, but they're tricky to organize if you have a lot of them and lack a walk-in closet with a shoe wall. Stackable storage boxes can be configured to accommodate your space. Clear hard-plastic shoe boxes look sharp. If space is tight, consider an over-the-door organizer or an attractive stand-alone shoe cabinet. If you're a designer collector, fellow shoe fanatics have posted a million ideas for proudly displaying them on shelves as the coveted jewels they are. To keep tall boots standing up like soldiers, buy boot shapers, or insert pool noodles cut to size.

Block off a full weekend for the task so you can take your time. Once you have what you need, devote a few hours on Day 1 to the purge/clean and a few more on Day 2 to the edit/organize.

That last leg is best achieved in the company of a bottle of wine and a good friend who's equal parts stylish and honest. You try on clothes while they call out "Yes!" "No!" and "What were you thinking when you bought that?!"

MIND

MAP QUEST

I always thought orienteering was the sport of Swedes. Get out a compass and map and run through the woods like an *Amazing Race* contestant. Turns out, it's thriving in Canada too, and may be a boost to brain health.

A small, self-reported study from Hamilton's McMaster University that included 158 adults aged 18 to 87 suggests orienteering could help prevent cognitive decline related to dementia, and exercising navigational ability may be the reason why. We build spatial memory when we are young – how to find mom, the door, the street, the school. But as we age, "we likely do not rely on this brain region as much," says kinesiology graduate student Emma Waddington, the study's lead author. "Moreover, many older adults have smaller social circles, and outings are reduced."

"We are truly a sport for life," says Charlotte MacNaughton of Canmore, Alta., spokesperson for Orienteering Canada, which has 10,000 members. "We have little kids involved all the way to folks in the 90s," including a 90-plus age category at the championships. "We actually do get many folks in their 50s and 60s," she says. "Yes, you can run ... but walking is A-okay too!"

"If orienteering itself is not your cup of tea," says Waddington, you can "incorporate orienteering into your daily life" by turning off the GPS and using a map or challenging yourself by walking a new route.
–*Susan Grimbly*

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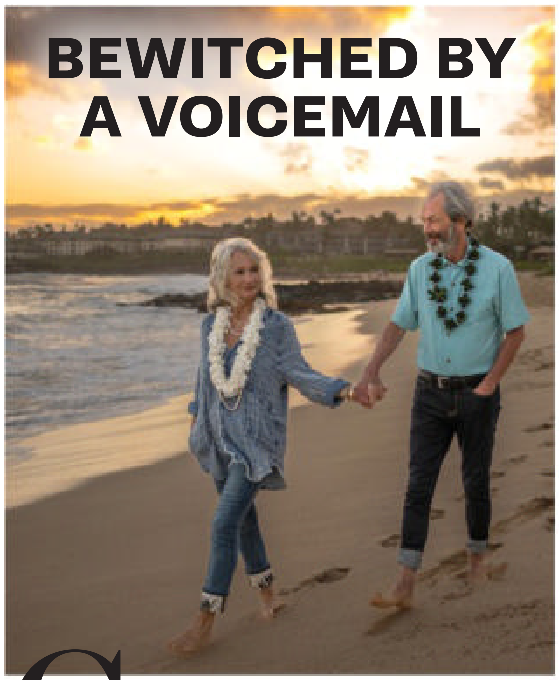
BEWITCHED BY A VOICEMAIL



Geography could not keep Charlene Boyce, 70, and Peter Cowley, 74, from falling in love.

Charlene Boyce: I'm a retired French-immersion teacher living on Georgian Bay in Ontario. I'm long divorced, with two wonderful sons and two charming granddaughters. The older son coerced me into online dating on OurTime. I signed up in early June 2015 and found Peter's profile that September.

Peter Cowley: I'm divorced, too, with one child and grandchildren, and I'd been dating online for eight long years. I was convinced I must be doing something wrong. It was dreadful, actually.

CB: My summer online was pretty dreadful too, for the record.

PC: I was so frustrated that I wrote, "If you don't live in the city of Vancouver, don't get in touch with me." I was born in Vancouver, always lived here, and worked at a think tank here for 20 years. Vancouver is in my blood and I wanted someone who loved this city as much as I did. Plus, I was sick of travelling so far.

CB: I'd initially restricted my settings to Ontario but got fed up, too, and had recently changed my settings. That's when I found Peter's profile, which was so articulate and proficient. I thought, "This is exactly what I'm looking for. This is my kind of guy." So I reached out anyway, and asked him to reconsider his parameters.

PC: I was interested enough to give her my phone number, but I didn't pick up when she called. Charlene left the loveliest message I've ever received. As soon as I heard it, I knew. Everything I'd said before about Vancouver didn't matter. We spent 80 hours on the phone that month. I still have the bill, I think.

CB: Over all those phone calls, we learned that both our fathers were members of the air force during the First World War and both our mothers were French Canadian. Even though we were far apart geographically, our roots were in Quebec. Six months later, when Peter asked me to marry him, my first question was, "Where?" The obvious answer was Quebec City.

PC: She threw a pre-party at the Citadelle de Quebec, which they don't regularly do, and then the wedding at the Quebec Garrison Club. She did the whole thing. She's amazing.

CB: By chance, I'd met this fellow on a barstool in a bistro who is a member, and he invited us to have the wedding there. I called Peter and said, "Can you even believe it?"

PC: Of course I could believe it. She just makes things happen all the time.

CB: I'm the luckiest girl in all of Canada.

PC: I tried to get her to move to Vancouver, to go skiing, etc.

CB: But I said, "Are you kidding, Peter? I can't leave the beauty of Georgian Bay." We couldn't decide where to live. Then we thought, we could keep both.

PC: Now we go back and forth based on however we feel. There's no schedule.

CB: Once we've been in the forest a while, when we're itching for the city, we pack up for Vancouver. And when we need the quiet, we come back. It's perfect. *—As told to Rosemary Counter*

HAVE YOU HAD ANOTHER CHANCE AT LOVE? *Zoomer* wants to hear from you! Send your story and contact information to *comment@zoomermag.com* to possibly be featured in the magazine.

SPIRIT

SOCIAL RX

Don't be surprised if you get a prescription from your doctor that isn't filled at the pharmacy. Family physicians are now treating patients, especially older ones who might be lonely, with "social prescribing." There's even a Canadian Institute for Social Prescribing that aims to address the impact of social determinants like ageism, loneliness and social isolation on health.

"You can feel alone if you sense that there is no one who supports you or cares about you," explains Harry Taylor, an assistant professor of social work at the University of Toronto who studies the impacts of social isolation.

The social benefits of volunteering, for example, are strongest among those aged 40 and older, according to a 2016 study published in the *British Medical Journal.* Even going for a walk or a coffee with a good friend can boost happiness - and health. As the director of an 85-year Harvard University study on happiness recently concluded, "positive relationships keep us happier, healthier and help us live longer."

And why do family doctors care about that? "Loneliness is related to almost every health outcome you can think of," explains Taylor. "It's associated with worse cognition and greater functional decline." Among older adults, it's associated with increased risk for cardiovascular disease and premature death. That's why "social fitness" is something to strive for, just like physical fitness. *–Judy Gerstel*

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EVERYDAY CANCER

Holding steadfastly to my daily routines // **BY LIBBY ZNAIMER** //

I could start a delivery service with all the people who have offered to pick up groceries for me, and we could eat well for weeks if I said yes to the homemade meals my friends are keen to provide. So far, I am cooking as much as ever, even though my taste buds are a bit off and the numbness in my fingers is making it challenging, if not a little dangerous. But I have to admit the last hour-plus grocery shopping trip left me frustrated, frazzled and fatigued.

My friends and family are falling over themselves to figure out how to help me get through my latest treatment for stomach cancer. I am equally anxious to maintain my regular routine. I'm talking about mundane tasks like grocery shopping – chores that so many other busy people delegated a long time ago.

For the moment, I have given up travel, live performances and larger social events, because it is the everyday moments that make me feel like I am living my life, and the space the cancer is taking is smaller than those special occasions. I have done my best to make this cancer manageable, even schedulable. But an ever-increasing and changing list of side-effects is challenging that assumption.

I have combined chemo and immunotherapy every other Friday. Some of it comes home with me and I don't get disconnected until Sunday. Until this week, Tuesday was the bad day. So, I decided to make that shopping trip on Monday. It was a bad idea. The doctor had warned about fatigue that "will be worse than anything you have experienced." When it didn't happen after the first few treatments, I was sure I was clear. Wrong again. There's also worsening neuropathy in my fingers and toes, and extreme sensitivity to cold that makes it difficult to swallow anything that is not hot. Last time I played tennis, my knee swelled up. Did I mention that I sometimes see flashing lights in one eye? I sound like an older person kvetching, and I don't want to be that woman.

When I was diagnosed with my first cancer, breast cancer, in 2006, the hardest thing to get used to was the *idea* of having cancer – of thinking of myself that way. Now, after surviving breast cancer, and pancreatic cancer in 2008, it is the practicalities that are troubling me. It is hard to accept that I may need help with ordinary tasks, and that I may not be able to follow through on everything I promise. I haven't accepted it. Back then, I had to put limits on the time I spent ruminating about cancer. Now I have to make mental appointments to research my disease or look at my latest test results. I have begun to wonder whether that is self-preservation or denial.

So, on Monday, I went to the grocery store. I like to choose my own ingredients because that is the best way to make sure I get what I want. Monday morning, it turns out, is not the best time to find fresh produce. When I came across vegetables I liked, my fingers were too numb to put them into the little plastic bags that hang on the shelves. But there were very few of those available; people had been using them instead of the single-use shopping bags that had been banned since my last visit. For me that was a small victory. Instead of highlighting a new frailty, it put me in the same frustrating boat as everyone else. I may even be ready to let my lovely friends do the grocery shopping for me.

Libby Znaimer (*libby@zoomer.ca*) is VP of news on AM740 and Classical 96.3 FM (ZoomerMedia properties).

PHOTOGRAPHY, PIXEL STORIES/STOCKSY

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EMERGENCY-PROOF YOUR FINANCES

Some emergencies in life can affect you financially – planning for life's inevitable twists and turns will help you have peace of mind.

HOW DO I PLAN FOR A FINANCIAL EMERGENCY?

ASK THE TOUGH QUESTIONS

The first step in planning for a financial emergency is to take a good look at your current life situation and finances. Ask yourself key questions, such as: If I needed cash quickly, where would it come from? Would I be able to assist loved ones if they needed financial support? Do I have enough in my emergency fund? Are my financial plan and insurance options up to date?

CREATE AN EMERGENCY FUND

An emergency fund is money you set aside to pay for unexpected expenses. It is one of the most important steps you can take to decrease your financial risk. Having this money available means that in an emergency you can avoid using your credit card or selling assets to cover the costs.

➜ Generally, financial advisors suggest that an emergency fund should cover three to six months of expenses. However, it's important to consider your unique financial circumstances.

➜ The goal for your emergency fund is to be able to access this money immediately. That doesn't mean you have to keep it in a zero-interest chequing account, though. Consider a low-risk investment that will help you grow your balance such as a savings account, bank money market account, GIC (Guaranteed investment Certificate) or a TFSA (Tax-Free Savings Account).

➜ Make building your emergency fund as easy as possible. Pick an amount and a frequency (e.g., weekly, bi-weekly, monthly) and set up an auto-deposit from your chequing account into your emergency fund.

➜ When building your emergency fund, you might also consider opening a line of credit, which tends to have a low interest rate. If you don't have enough saved but need emergency funds, you can bridge the gap through your standby line of credit.

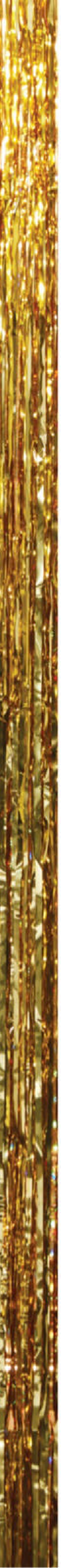
GET HELP FROM A FINANCIAL ADVISOR

A financial advisor can help you figure out how to save for an emergency, or understand how an emergency fund fits into your overall financial plan. And if your financial plan needs updating as your life continues to change, that's even more of a reason to reach out.

BOTTOM LINE?

Emergencies are out of your control but being prepared is not. With the expertise of a financial advisor to help you get a good plan in place, you will have less stress and reduce the risk that you can't cover the costs should the unexpected happen.

LEARN HOW TO DEVELOP A FINANCIAL PLAN FOR EMERGENCIES AT RBCFINANCIALPLANNING.COM



eugene levy packs his bags

IN A NEW TV SERIES, *THE RELUCTANT TRAVELER*, THE NOTORIOUSLY PRIVATE CANADIAN COMEDIAN GETS OUT OF CHARACTER – AND HIS COMFORT ZONE – ONLY TO REALIZE HE LIKES IT THERE

BY JOHANNA SCHNELLER // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SATY + PRATHA

it took Eugene Levy a few years to figure out his hair. Like, 70 years. It also took him that long to open himself up to the world. But first, the hair.

In the early 1970s, doing improv on stage at The Second City in Toronto, he sported a Roman look, combed forward. Then he grew it out into a frizz ball. Doing *SCTV* in the early '80s, his look hewed dangerously close to his recurring character Bobby Bittman, the flop-sweaty nightclub singer with the bouffant hair turban. As Jim's dad in the *American Pie* franchise, he wore it close cut, a hair shower cap. For *A Mighty Wind*'s Mitch Cohen, a depressed folk singer (Levy's most daring character of the four showbiz sendups he co-wrote with Christopher Guest), he went beatnik-Beethoven: grey, centre-parted and chin length, plus an absurd strip goatee. And then came *Schitt's Creek*.

Playing Johnny Rose, the dapper video-store magnate fallen on hard times – the steadfast husband of flamboyant Moira (Catherine O'Hara), and patriarch to clothes-horse children Alexis and David (Annie Murphy and Daniel Levy, Eugene's real-life son) – Levy suddenly found himself the straight man on a CBC smash that grew on Netflix into a global, multi-Emmy-winning phenomenon. And … he liked it. Those well-tailored suits. A costumer, Peter Webster, who, before each take, ran a clothes brush over his shoulders and whispered, "Posture!" in his ear. And, most crucially, a hairdresser, Ana (pronounced Anya) Sorys, who finally figured out The Levy: an elegant salt-and-pepper swoop, very high-end Scotch ad.

She's been his sole stylist ever since. As host of the new AppleTV+ series, *The Reluctant Traveler*, Levy trotted around the globe, from the Maldives to Finland, Venice to Tokyo, and Sorys was with him every step. "Once he found out how good he can look, there was no turning back," O'Hara, who's been Levy's friend and colleague for 50 years, tells me. "They're a great team, Ana and Eugene's head."

When I meet Levy, 76, over Zoom in late February, his hair is perfect. He wears a dark jacket, shirt and tie; his trademark round Leon glasses, which he bought in bulk; and his Order of Canada pin (he's a Companion, the highest level). Rectangle eyebrows fill his forehead. The name on his Zoom window reads "Liam Neeson," which I assume is a subtle gag, but after a few minutes an invisible someone changes it to "Eugene Levy."

the conceit of *The Reluctant Traveler* is this: Levy goes to the most fascinating places in the world, where he stays in jaw-dropping hotels, yet he'd rather be home in Pacific Palisades, Calif., with his wife of 45 years, Deb Divine, comfortably ensconced in his routine – playing golf every Wednesday and Friday; visiting Daniel or their daughter Sarah (who played Twyla on *Schitt's*) and her eight-month-old son, James, who already has an impish twinkle in his eye; and eating frequent dinners with Martin Short, his best friend for 50 years, who lives five minutes away.

The series works because he means it. "If someone had asked me, 'Will your dad say yes or no to hosting a travel show?' I would have answered, 'One thousand per cent no,'" Sarah Levy says. "Then again, Daniel got him to wear a lavender suit. No one saw that coming, either."

Producer David Brindley and AppleTV+ programming exec Alison Kirkham, rabid *Schitt's* fans, originally pitched Levy to host a show about fabulous hotels. He reeled off a list of reasons he was wrong for it: "I'm not an explorer," he tells me. "I'm not a curious person by nature. I have a very low sense of adventure. I have a natural phobia of heights. I don't like the creepy crawly things you find in jungle-type situations. Am I scared for my life? No. Do I enjoy it? No." ➤

But with every reason he'd give, "I was getting laughs on the phone," Levy continues. Brindley and Kirkham hung up, called each other back and said, "*That's* the show." (Only Levy could talk himself out of a luxury gig and into a less comfortable one.)

"Wouldn't everyone want to be Eugene when they're 70?" Brindley says. "He's effortlessly cool. Urbane, suave, witty. He's got an incredibly good heart. People gravitate toward him. He's a Canadian national treasure."

Annie Murphy agrees. "He's one of my favourite people on this Earth," she says. "He's a great actor, but you can't fake that level of kindness." Their first meeting demonstrated this – and his mild obsessive-compulsive disorder. Murphy arrived for a *Schitt's* callback audition "all bundled up, purse, coat, scarf," she says. "I was so nervous, because I wanted this job with all my heart." As she unbuttoned her coat, she got tangled in her scarf, then her scarf got wound around her purse. She threw the whole lump on the ground, then locked eyes with Levy, whose mouth was open in slight panic. "A coat isn't supposed to be on a floor," Murphy explains in Levy's rawr-rawr voice. "He came around the table, shook my hand and said, 'Let me hang up your coat.' I said, 'Please don't bother!' And he said, 'No, I'm going to hang up your coat.'" He dusted it off and walked it to a corner rack. "It set the tone for our whole relationship," Murphy says. "Plus, if my coat stayed on the floor, there would have been no paying attention to my audition."

Left to right: Levy and *Schitt's Creek* co-star Annie Murphy reunite at the 2020 Critics Choice Awards; sharing a laugh with Catherine O'Hara during a 2014 *Zoomer* photo shoot in Toronto ahead of the series première of *Schitt's Creek*; a family photo-op with children Sarah and Dan Levy during an event celebrating their hit TV series in 2016.

PHOTOGRAPHY, SATY + PRATHA (PORTRAIT); CHRIS CHAPMAN (O'HARA & LEVY); STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE (LEVY & MURPHY); MATT WINKELMEYER/GETTY IMAGES (LEVY FAMILY)

For his new series, Levy was reluctant about more than the travelling part. "I have to be myself on camera, which I haven't been before," he says. "Nor have I ever wanted to be. I've only done character work. The further removed the character was from who I am, the more comfortable I was. The closer it got to being me, like in *Schitt's Creek*, the more nerve-wracking it was."

Levy won't even call himself a comedian. "I don't look at life the way a stand-up comedian does," he says. "I don't look for the funny angle to try to get a laugh. I hang around with funny people, but I take a backseat to them. I'm a true ensemble player. When I'm in character, I'm comfortable looking for where the laughs are, and how to make something interesting. But I'm not the person in the front of the room entertaining the crowd. I'd much rather be the person in the back of the crowd, watching the person entertaining the crowd."

For most of his 50-year career, Levy hid behind his characters' moustaches, buck teeth, oversized glasses, and, in *Best in Show*, two left feet (literally). He perfected cringe humour before cringe was a thing. But here's his secret weapon: "His characters were awkward," Murphy says, "but they were also deeply good-natured and endearing." That's rare on screen, where we've been conditioned to see the awkward guy as the butt of the joke, the one to make fun of. Levy's unique awkwardness-plus-goodness makes him the guy we root for.

his modesty is part of the reason many people don't know that he co-wrote the Guest movies, and co-developed *Schitt's Creek* with Daniel. "Eugene is a great collaborator," O'Hara says. "He listens, he really thinks about what he puts to paper. When you suggest ideas, he will never just say yes or no. Even if you make him laugh, he'll think, 'Did I laugh for some other reason, or will it really work within the material?' On *SCTV*, he ➤

wrote more group scenes than anyone else, like the ridiculous soap operas we did. He was very good at writing for everyone, not just himself."

He's also a generous friend. Both O'Hara and Divine were waitresses at Second City when Levy, Short and Andrea Martin were in the cast. "Eugene is the one who encouraged Marty not to leave town," O'Hara says. "Marty was saying, 'If I don't get a job by X point, I'm giving up and doing something else with my life.' And Eugene forced him to audition for *Godspell*," the legendary Toronto production that launched the careers of, among others, Gilda Radner, Victor Garber and Paul Shaffer. "Same with Andrea," O'Hara continues. "When Eugene found out someone had dropped out of *Godspell*, he told Andrea, 'Come to this party this weekend, the producers will be there, be your hilarious self.' And she got the job. He hired me for the Chris Guest movies, and for *Schitt's Creek*."

One of Murphy's favourite pastimes on the *Schitt's Creek* set was watching Eugene "absorb so much joy from watching his children be incredibly talented actors," Murphy says. "He would get a little bucket of snacks, stand behind the monitors, and watch Dan and Sarah work, with this proud, fatherly smile on his face. He would mouth their lines along with them. It was very 'dance mom' of him."

So how does a guy who peppers our interview with self-deprecating lines – "I feel there are people much more interesting to listen to than me," and, "People think that for some reason I'm funny. They think I'm funnier than I think I am," and, "Oh, I can't compare myself to Daniel when I was his age. He's way ahead of where I was. He's a much more gifted writer, producer and director" – choose to spend his life as an entertainer? How does he square that in his head?

i ask him that question every which way, but I get back a lot of this: "I … you know … I just never … Well, in real life…." Finally, he says, "I don't honestly know if there's an answer deep enough for that question. I just love comedy. For me, the comedic soil is most fertile with characters who aren't the sharpest pencils in the drawer. Characters who don't quite have it, but think they do. So that's what I do. I can't say what I'm learning from that."

On *The Reluctant Traveler*, Levy is more willing to stick his arm up an elephant's bum to extract a dung sample than he is to engage in any kind of self-examination, whether it's forest therapy in Costa Rica or stargazing in Utah. His head is practically stamped Private Property – Do Not Enter.

"I've had a shitload of therapy, and I'm still, 'Who am I? What's my purpose?'" Murphy says. "Watching ➤

1970s, *The Second City*

1980s, *SCTV*

1990s, *American Pie*

2000s, *A Mighty Wind*

2010s, *Schitt's Creek*

Levy in a scene from *The Reluctant Traveler*, a series that sees the admittedly unadventurous actor visit stunning locales around the globe.

PHOTOGRAPHY, DICK DARRELL/TORONTO STAR VIA GETTY IMAGES (1978); EVERETT COLLECTION INC/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (1980'S); ENTERTAINMENT PICTURES/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (2001); EVERETT COLLECTION INC/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (2003); CBS/NOT A REAL COMPANY/ALBUM/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (2003); CBS/NOT A REAL COMPANY/ALBUM/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (2015); IAN GAVAN/APPLE TV (2023)

Eugene's new show I thought, 'Goddammit, this man seems to know who he is.' He's the poster boy for Know Thyself."

Levy's comedy doesn't stem from trauma or anger, O'Hara says: "He's a good man who comes from a nice family, who made a lovely family with Deb, who's outside of his own head and aware of others, and who gets great material from observing the world."

He grew up in Hamilton, Ont., in a solid, middle-class Jewish family: homemaker mom, auto-plant foreman dad, sister and brother. He and Divine chose to raise their kids in Toronto, although many of their comedy pals decamped to L.A. "Ours wasn't a comedic household, but it was a household full of humour," Sarah says. "Both our parents are innately funny, and their friends would come over when they were in town. I'm sure Daniel and I were soaking things in. Timing, the way a word is said, when it's said, the punchline of a joke, what makes something funny or funnier."

From top: (left to right) Second City alum Joe Flaherty, Martin Short, Andrea Martin, Catherine O'Hara, Dave Thomas and Levy reunite at the troupe's original headquarters, Toronto's Old Fire Hall, in 1988; (left to right) actors Fred Willard, Catherine O'Hara, Christopher Guest, Parker Posey and Levy in a scene from the 1996 film *Waiting for Guffman*; (left to right) Eugene Levy, O'Hara, Dan Levy and Annie Murphy take a stroll in front of the now-famous *Schitt's Creek* Rosebud Motel in 2015.

in summers, the Levys rented a cottage with the Shorts, and Sarah would thrill to "Marty constantly picking on dad, with a huge smile on his face. Dad would come up with zingers, but Marty is so quick, it's impossible to keep up." She would always know when Short was phoning, because Eugene would burst out laughing at however he said hello.

As a father, Eugene was "doting and supportive," Sarah says. "Even when he felt we weren't making the right decisions, he wouldn't come out and say it. He just waited, and let us experience it on our own. Our parents are very different – my dad has an innate sense of giving everyone the benefit of the doubt, and my mom trusts no one." She laughs. "It's a testament to his faith in people. And his loyalty, above anything." As a grandfather, Levy is equally doting: He and Divine recently spent five weeks babysitting James in Newfoundland, where Sarah was working. They wrote a song for him, which they sang in two-part harmony.

Levy's allergy to oversharing is a running gag on *The Reluctant Traveler*, but it required a little massaging. "After our first shoot, we had an honest download," Brindley admits. "Eugene came to understand he'd have to give of himself a little bit." Amazingly, the series ended up doing for its host what Brindley hoped it would do for its audience: broaden horizons. "As we went along, and Eugene realized he was getting something from each of these experiences, he was willing to try more and more," Brindley says. "We watch as he realizes, 'Maybe I've been doing it a bit wrong. Maybe I should give more new things a go.' We all know – or are – people who fear certain things, who never quite commit. Eugene shows us that if you just edge outside your comfort zone a little, it might pay back in dividends."

"He's not an instant convert," O'Hara says. "It wouldn't be honest if he said, 'Wow, I know my true self now, and why I exist in the world.' He's a private person. He's not going to give it all away, and good for him. But he is honest when he says, 'Okaaay, maybe I'll look more into this.' How great is that? At any age, but especially at his age, that's a beautiful thing."

What Levy will admit is this: "It's been good for me to dust off some cobwebs, brush up on skills I haven't focused on too much in my life. I do feel a whole lot better about myself at this age. I'm much more comfortable with who I am now than I ever have been. I spent years taking things a little too intensely, working too hard to get something done, trying too hard in front of the camera. Years ago, I wouldn't have been able to tell a producer, 'I don't think I'm the right host.' I'd have been too desperate.

"But I'm not wound quite so tight anymore," he sums up. "Not too much rattles me now. I've learned to relax, let the lines drain out of my face, take everything in, and just be who I am." Excellent hair is the cherry on top.

PHOTOGRAPHY, GAIL HARVEY/TORONTO STAR VIA GETTY IMAGES (SECOND CITY TROUPERS); EVERETT COLLECTION INC/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (WAITING FOR GUFFMAN); CBS/NOT A REAL COMPANY/ALBUM/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (SCHITT'S CREEK)

Styling, Erica Cloud; on-set stylist, Cenk Papila, makeup, Lucky Bromhead; hair, Ana Sorys; set, Kristen Lim Tung. Levy was photographed on location at Neighborhood Studios, Toronto, Oct. 31, 2020. Produced by Arthouse

PHOTOGRAPHY, JESSE CHEHAK/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES

Teen Spirit

The classic novel *Are you There God? It's Me, Margaret* is reimagined as a movie. Its author, Judy Blume, and the film's director discuss it's enduring appeal

By Kim Hughes

LEAVE IT TO JUDY BLUME TO PROVE THE adage about good things coming to those who wait. The author of the classic 1970 coming-of-age novel *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.* gave an engaging, sympathetic voice to tween girls suffering the ravages of puberty in an era when talking openly about things like the onset of menstruation was unthinkable. A timeless smash was born.

Yet Blume refused to permit the bestselling book to be adapted for film until 2018, when she received a "charming and persuasive letter" from writer-director Kelly Fremon Craig, 42. "She was passionate about doing the movie," Blume, 85, says in an email from Key West, Fla., where she lives with her husband, George Cooper, and runs the independent bookstore Books & Books. "But what really got to me was that she'd written and directed *The Edge of Seventeen*, a movie I'd seen and thoroughly enjoyed," Blume says, referring to Fremon Craig's 2016 young adult hit dramedy.

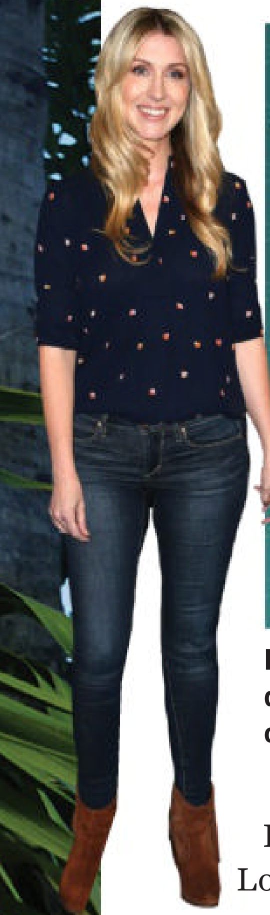
"The icing on the cake was that James L. Brooks [*Terms of Endearment*, *As Good as It Gets*] was her mentor and producer, and would be on this project full time. Kelly offered to come to Key West with Jim to talk it all through. They came and here we are!"

Now, 53 years after its publication, *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.*, will open in cinemas April 28 with a starry cast, featuring Rachel McAdams as Margaret's mother, Kathy Bates as her grandmother and Abby Ryder Fortson acing the role of the story's precocious protagonist.

The novel is written in the first person, as Margaret moves away from her beloved grandmother in New York, starts Grade 6 at a new school in New Jersey, turns 12 and must decide which of her parents' faiths – Christian or Jewish – if any, to follow. "In the movie, Margaret's parents and grandmother are three-dimensional people," says Blume. "You get to know them, understand them, get angry at them, care about them. What surprises me is I can't remember if certain movie moments are in the book or not. Kelly blended it so seamlessly."

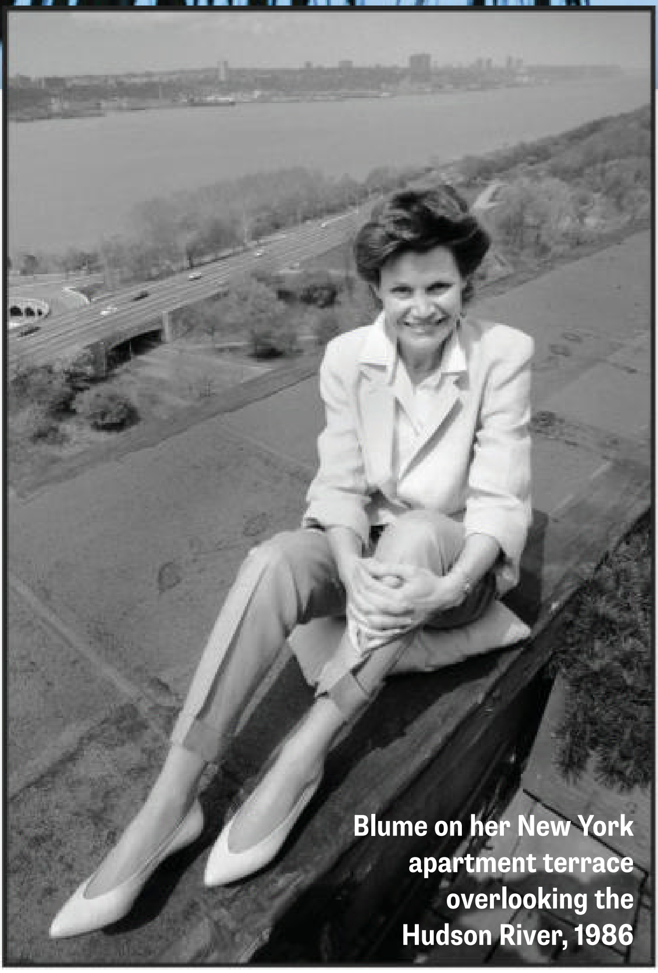
➤

Blume is photographed in Key West, Fla., in 2007.



BASED ON THE JUDY BLUME BOOK LOVED BY MILLIONS
RACHEL McADAMS
ABBY RYDER FORTSON
KATHY BATES
Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret.
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE EDGE OF SEVENTEEN
WRITTEN FOR THE SCREEN AND DIRECTED BY KELLY FREMON CRAIG
PRODUCED BY JAMES L. BROOKS
04.28.23
ONLY IN THEATERS

Kelly Fremon Craig (left) directed the movie adaptation of Blume's 1970 book.



Blume on her New York apartment terrace overlooking the Hudson River, 1986

In a phone interview from Los Angeles, Fremon Craig says she just wanted to make a film that Blume would be proud of. "The fact that she feels that way is beyond my wildest dreams."

Fremon Craig's delightful adaptation, told with note-perfect period details and soaring performances, seems poised to turn a whole new generation on to a book many consider the blueprint for the young adult fiction genre. We interviewed Fremon Craig about nostalgia and the film, and Judy Blume about the book's impact and its relevance today.

KIM HUGHES: What was the hardest thing to get right with the film?
KELLY FREMON CRAIG: Capturing the complexity of Margaret's spiritual search, which is so beautifully drawn in the book. That's such a personal thing, and when you translate something to a different medium, things often have to change. But you need a north star even as you make those changes, and the north star was always, 'Does this make me feel the way Judy Blume made me feel?'

KH: What did the book mean to you?
KFC: Judy Blume turned me into a reader and ultimately a writer. As a young person, reading about characters who felt familiar made me think, 'Maybe I could write something.' That was very formative. It's surreal to be collaborating with somebody who was such a big part of my upbringing.

KH: Did you consider fast-forwarding the story to appeal to contemporary tweens, or do the central themes of puberty and religious struggle still apply?
KFC: I wanted to create a general nostalgia so that, no matter what decade you grew up in, the film feels completely timeless, and reminds people of their own childhoods. That's how the book feels: contemporary no matter when you read it. Plus, I would have opened a vein if I saw Margaret with a cellphone in her hand. That felt sacrilegious.

KH: You have a knack for humorously chronicling young people in stormy emotional waters.
KFC: Feelings I had at that age were so heightened, it's like they're seared into me. When I look back at that younger version of myself, I have great compassion. The awkwardness, uncertainty, and the questions one has at that time in their life – something about it just cracks my heart open. Maybe this is some sort of therapy [laughs].

KH: Could a man have made this movie?
KFC: Ha! No! Period.

◆

FULL BLUME

◆

KH: Judy, has the book's staying power surprised you?
JUDY BLUME: When I wrote the book I didn't know if it would be published. Then, I didn't know if readers would like it. Now it's 50-plus years later, so yes, I am surprised and grateful to my readers for making it happen.

KH: You have a small cameo as a dogwalker in the film and are credited as a producer. Can you offer a few adjectives to describe the mood on set?
JB: Joyful. Exciting, yet calm. You could feel that something special was happening. I think we all felt it, cast and crew.

KH: You have recently done the documentary *Judy Blume Forever* (which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January) and donated your archive to Yale University's Beinecke Library. Is this a way of having agency over your legacy?
JB: None of the above. I never think about legacy. It was time to find a home for my archive – all those wonderful letters from kids – because we were moving. One of the documentary filmmakers [Davina Pardo] had been emailing for years asking about doing a doc, but I thought I didn't want one. Then we met in person, and she persuaded me [sound familiar?]. I think it was her passion for the project, too, plus she and her partner, Leah Wolchok, had won an Emmy for a documentary they'd done together [2015's *Very Semi-Serious*, about *New Yorker* cartoons]. It's just that everything happened at around the same time. I thought it might be, creatively, satisfying and fun. And it was. Also, exhausting. Now [author and *New York Times* columnist] Mark Oppenheimer is writing a biography, something else I thought I didn't want. This will be the last 'Judy' project for a while. After all, I am 85! Z

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REINVENTION

FOLLOW THE INK

A writer stumbles into filmmaking, only to decide it's not the definitive third act

By Brian D. Johnson

PURE WILDGRAPE
JUICE SUN THICK
(DUNDAS WEST OVERPASS)

The author's documentary follows Toronto artist Jason Logan on foraging trips for natural pigments like wild grapes (above), which he turns into "living ink" and tests on paper (opposite), adding words evoked by the images.

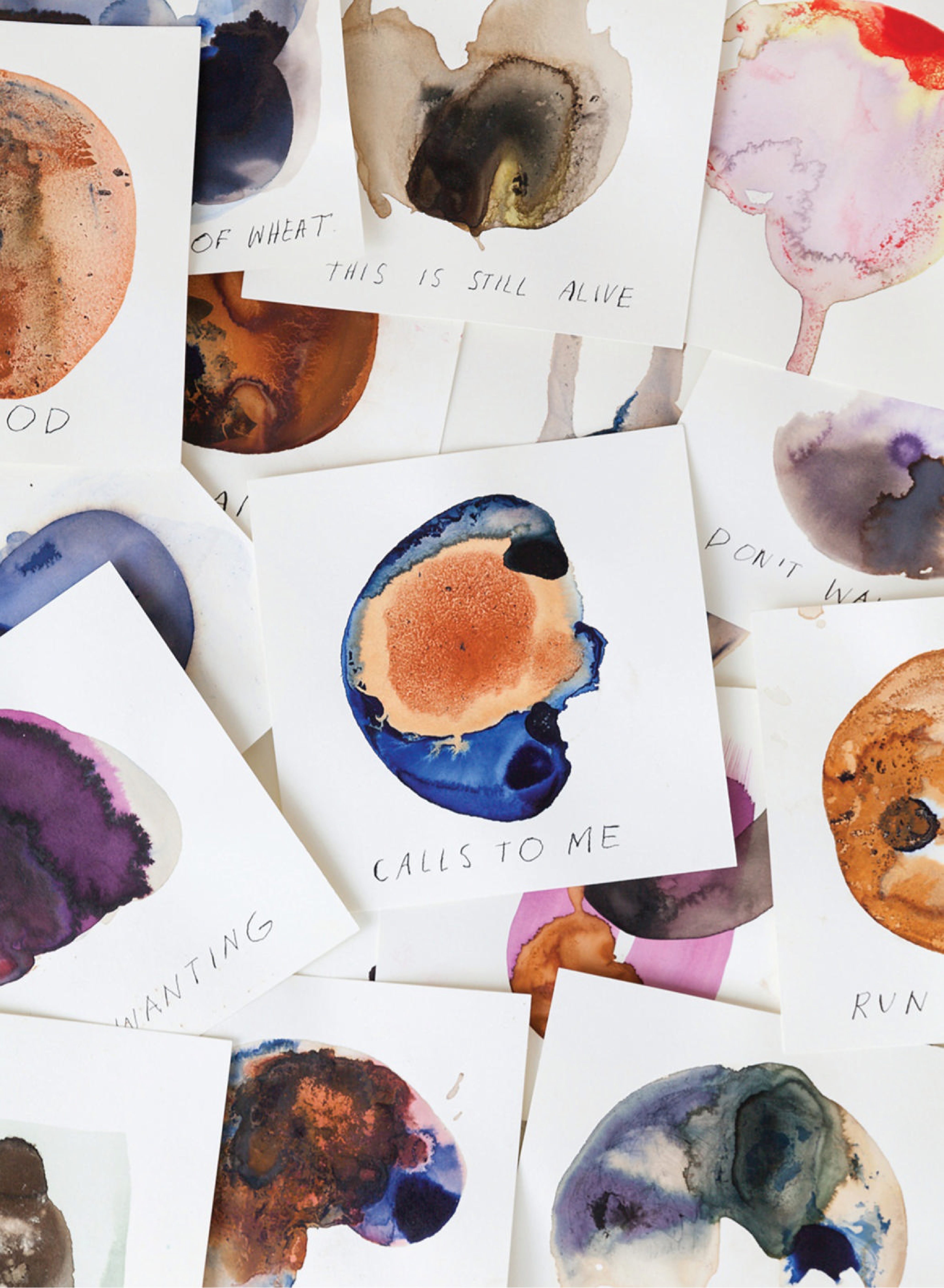
WHENEVER I'M ASKED why I wanted to make a movie about ink, I draw a blank. Even now that *The Colour of Ink* is a tangible thing – its theatrical release in six Canadian cities was launched (in Toronto) March 23, seven years after I began shooting it – the fact that it exists still baffles me.

True, I've made my career working with ink, as a young reporter scribbling notes and hammering the carbon ribbon of a typewriter in a Montreal newsroom, and then graduating from newsprint to magazines, where the ink didn't come off in your hands. But like most writers, I never gave the stuff a second thought. The words were all that mattered.

Ironically, it was the digital revolution that led me back to ink. One summer at a log cabin on a lake, I discovered the video button on a little point-and-shoot camera and began editing on a computer using iMovie, the gateway drug for a generation of amateur filmmakers. As I upscaled to camcorders, I got hooked. Long before YouTube and TikTok, I had no idea I was riding a wave that would turn anyone with a phone into an amateur auteur.

➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, @TORONTOINKCOMPANY(GRAPES); LAUREN KOLYN (INK PAPERS)


OF WHEAT
THIS IS STILL ALIVE
OD
DON'T WA
CALLS TO ME
WANTING
RUN

AFTER THREE DECADES of writing about the arts as a journalist and film critic for *Maclean's*, I didn't go looking for a career as a filmmaker. Films found me by happenstance, one after the other. I stumbled across the subject of my first documentary feature, *Al Purdy Was Here*, 10 years ago when my wife, writer Marni Jackson, asked me to cut some archival footage of Purdy for a benefit concert to restore the poet's A-frame cabin as a writing retreat. The Purdy film led me directly to *The Colour of Ink*, at the foot of the poet's bronze statue in Toronto's Queen's Park.

While I was shooting an interview about Purdy with Margaret Atwood, she informed me that the statue had a Twitter feed, which posted random observations of whatever it "saw" from day to day. (*The squirrels are on the move again . . . someone left half a can of Sprite for me.*) "We don't know who it is," said Atwood, but she'd been following the statue's tweets for months. That evening, at a reception for the Griffin Poetry Prize, I was approached by Jason Logan, a graphic designer and art director I knew from our years together at *Maclean's*. "You have to introduce me to Margaret Atwood," he said. "I have to give her something."

"That's funny, I was just talking to her this afternoon. But she's not here."

Then he blurted out: "I'm the voice of the Statue of Al Purdy on Twitter." After that head-snapping coincidence, Logan's statue tweets ended up in the Purdy film as little moments of Zen. But it didn't stop there. What he'd wanted to give Atwood was a bottle of ink made from black walnuts harvested from a tree overlooking the statue.

Since leaving *Maclean's*, Logan had found a new passion creating "living inks" with materials foraged from the wild – weeds, berries, flowers, rocks, rust . . . just about anything. And it all began with ink made with black walnuts from a tree overlooking the statue. I actually filmed Logan collecting them and cooking ink in his kitchen. That was a bridge too far for *Purdy*, and the scenes were cut. But they planted a seed, and some of the orphaned footage would find a home in my next film. I was filming *The Colour of Ink* years before I was even aware of it.

Footage begets footage. Logan later invited me to shoot some "ink tests" in his home studio, and that's when I fell under the spell. As I watched an eyedropper squirt of ink come alive on a square of paper, it seemed to be moving and morphing with a mind of its own. A drop of lye, made with rainwater sifted through the ashes of a pear tree, would land in a pool of purple squeezed from buckthorn berries and produce a starburst of golden green. Viewing this through a macro lens was like stumbling across an undiscovered cosmos. And the desire to see that alchemy magnified on the big screen is what compelled me to make a movie.

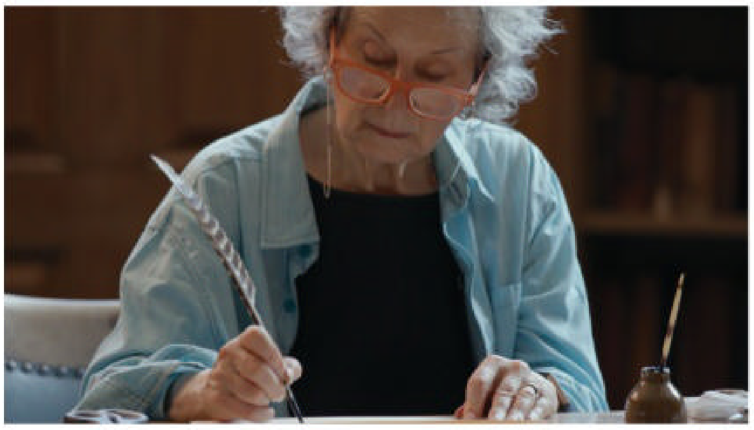
Logan's ink tests are his signature art works – stripped of ego by the notion that the ink is the artist. He began posting them on Instagram, where they found an avid following and caught the eye of a New York editor, which led to his 2018 book, *Make Ink*. Oddly, posting pixels on Instagram brought Logan back to the analog world of print – and to a growing community of kindred spirits who shared his passion for physical media and natural colour. He also posted his ink through mail, sending little bottles of colour to artists he admired around the world.

AS A WHIM GREW into a project, Logan and I agreed it would not be a typical portrait of the artist. His explorations would guide the narrative. But ink would act as our silent protagonist. We would follow his ink to find our story, tracing its path to a constellation of other artists. They ranged from Brooklyn's Liana Finck, an irreverent young cartoonist making waves at the *New Yorker*, to Tokyo's Koji Kakinuma, a calligrapher performing *shodo* brushstrokes on a monumental scale; from Corey Bulpitt, a Haida carver painting a cedar mask in British Columbia, to Roxx, a tattoo artist on an eternal search for "a blacker black" in the mountains above Malibu. And Margaret Atwood, doodling with a quill.

It wasn't easy. I'd financed the Purdy film almost overnight, just by listing a pantheon of famous Canadian authors and singer-songwriters not yet cast. But it took me two years to get *The Colour of Ink* off the ground. I wrote countless pitches, which spun into synopses, outlines and storyboards. Shot in seven countries – Canada, the U.S., Mexico, Japan, Italy, Norway and the U.K. – it was an ambitious project. Eventually we found funding thanks to executive producer Ron Mann, who has mentored all my films into existence, and the National Film Board of Canada.

After making a biographical documentary about a dead poet, I wanted this one to work as visual poetry, without experts or talking heads. It would unfold as an odyssey tacking between epic and intimate landscapes, from Logan's foraging adventures in the wild to the secret life of ink on the page. It would be a road movie, with a crew of just three guys in a van: Logan, myself and cinematographer Nick ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, LAUREN KOLYN; COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA AND SPHINX PRODUCTIONS (KAKINUMA, ATWOOD, LOGAN AND INK TEST)



Clockwise from top: Margaret Atwood uses a quill pen and ink at the University of Toronto; Logan's notebook, inks and tools; foraged materials: stone, rust, chalk, moss, goldenrod gall and seeds; Logan in his home studio; bright pink made from cochineal insects and a weed called lamb's quarters.

Opposite above: Tokyo's Koji Kakinuma prepares his performance of large-scale calligraphy; opposite below: Logan tests ink made from drywall dust.

de Pencier, whose feats range from shooting The Tragically Hip's final tour to framing eerily exquisite landscapes of industrial ruin in *Watermark* and *Anthropocene*, films he co-directed with Jennifer Baichwal and photographer Ed Burtynsky.

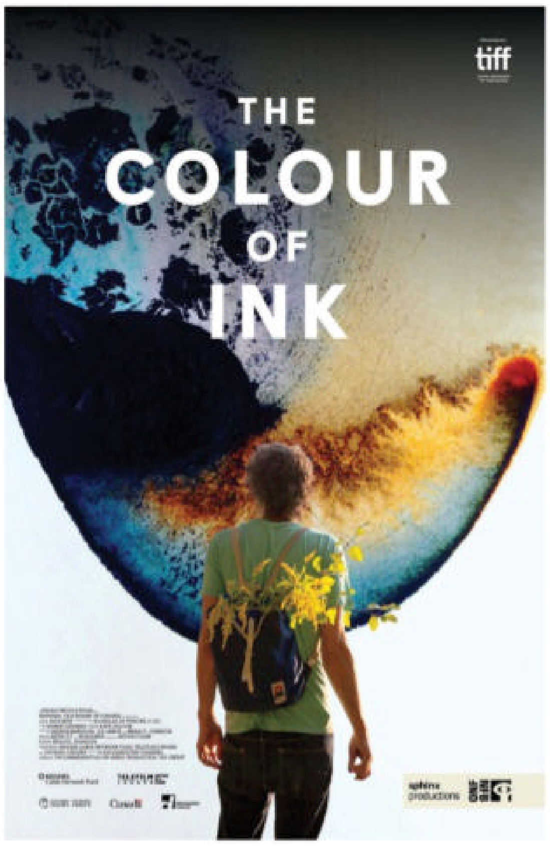
INK IS our oldest visual medium, and typically used to send a message, to leave a mark on some near or distant future. But Logan's ink flows both ways: It carries a story of the place it comes from. Purple ink made from wild grapes picked along a rail path near his home in Toronto evokes memories of his mother, who died when he was nine. She introduced him to grapevines by the train tracks near their home in rural Ontario. The tracks scared him, but he saw the grapes as a kind of magic portal.

Logan's search for the underworld of colour led us to unlikely places, from a Manhattan underpass where he scraped rust off a girder to a scorched California hillside where he made "wildfire ink" from charred bark. As we drove a van up the West Coast, it reminded me of my days in a band, happily riding a road to nowhere. But our journey was abruptly cut short by the pandemic. After flying home from a deserted airport in Seattle, we were stuck in Toronto for a year and a half.

Though we could no longer travel, Logan's inks could. He airmailed them to artists to locations around the world, and I'd direct local camera crews remotely by Zoom from Toronto. Awkward, to say the least. But as the pandemic stretched our production schedule from six months to more than two years, it held a silver lining. Time deepens a documentary like nothing else. We discovered one of our most vital subjects, Japanese American painter Yuri Shimojo, a year after we were originally due to wrap. And as I cut and recut the film with editor Robert Kennedy, a master of the slow reveal, the story just kept opening up.

Logan and I are from generations two decades apart. His brain is still on fire; mine is tending the coals. We both slid from solid careers in publishing to land in a wilder place. He didn't set out to be an ink maker; I didn't plan to be a filmmaker. We fell down our respective rabbit holes, which met at the statue of a dead poet. Careers are weird.

"We fell down our respective rabbit holes, which met at the statue of a dead poet. Careers are weird"



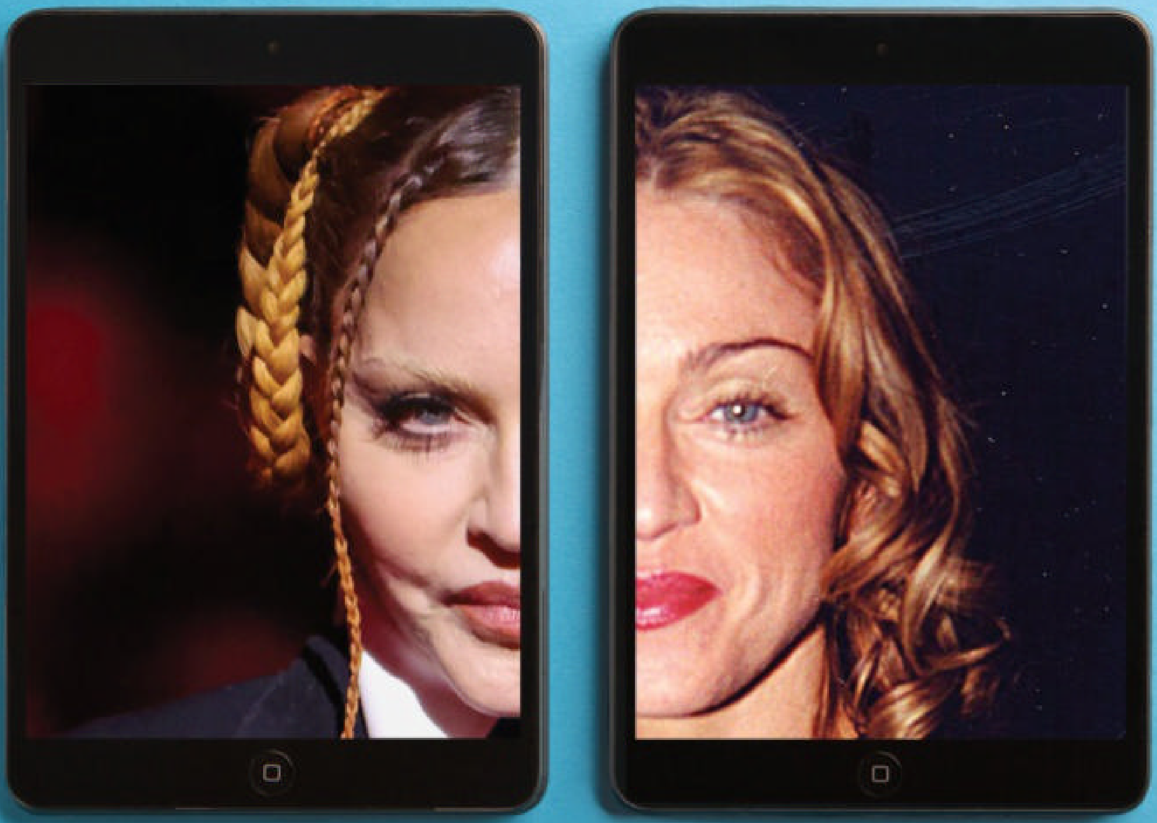
Brian D. Johnson, (top) and his film; opposite: foraged inks drying in custom dishes made by Toronto's Akai Ceramic Studio

Now that I've had some success making films, I inevitably get asked about my next one. But I'm not looking for a third act as a filmmaker. I've had enough careers. Like a lot of young writers who took jobs in journalism in the 1970s, I always felt that a career was a trap. The reason you became a writer in first place was to avoid it. In the late '70s, I quit a newspaper job with a bridge-burning gesture, wrote a book of poetry, then spent a few years in a rock band. As a career, music was a dead end, but it changed my life and would come back to motivate my filmmaking. I created *Al Purdy Was Here* in tandem with an album of original songs inspired by his poetry. For *The Colour of Ink*, I worked closely with Don Kerr, our endlessly inventive composer, to find the sound of ink. Meanwhile, I drove our music budget into the red by licensing songs from k.d. lang, Bruce Cockburn, Leonard Cohen, the Pretenders – and recording an eight-piece ensemble that conjured the colour blue with music by Miles Davis, George Gershwin and Joni Mitchell.

AFTER LIVING that dream, I don't need to make another movie. Each film began as a gift, became a self-made master class in how to do it, and was so much work I swore I'd never do it again. But the payoff – the showing your film to an audience – is like nothing else. It's possible to distance yourself from it and feel proud of it in a way that you can't with a piece of writing, because a film is not just your work. It stands there on the big screen, indisputably, like a building. You're the architect, but it's populated by a dozen other artists and was built by a team large enough to fill the theatre.

Now that I'm in the fourth quarter of my life, I plan to spend the rest of it slowing down. Spending more time with family and friends. Time with nature. Time "blackening pages," as Leonard Cohen liked to say. If *The Colour of Ink* leaves any kind of message, it's the need to stop, look around and just connect. I can do that by writing. Or picking up a camera and stopping time at 24 frames per second, but without a budget or a van. And I'll try to look beyond the frame. As Iggy Pop once said, explaining why he no longer felt the need to make another album and turn everything into art: "Sometimes I just like a good sky." Z

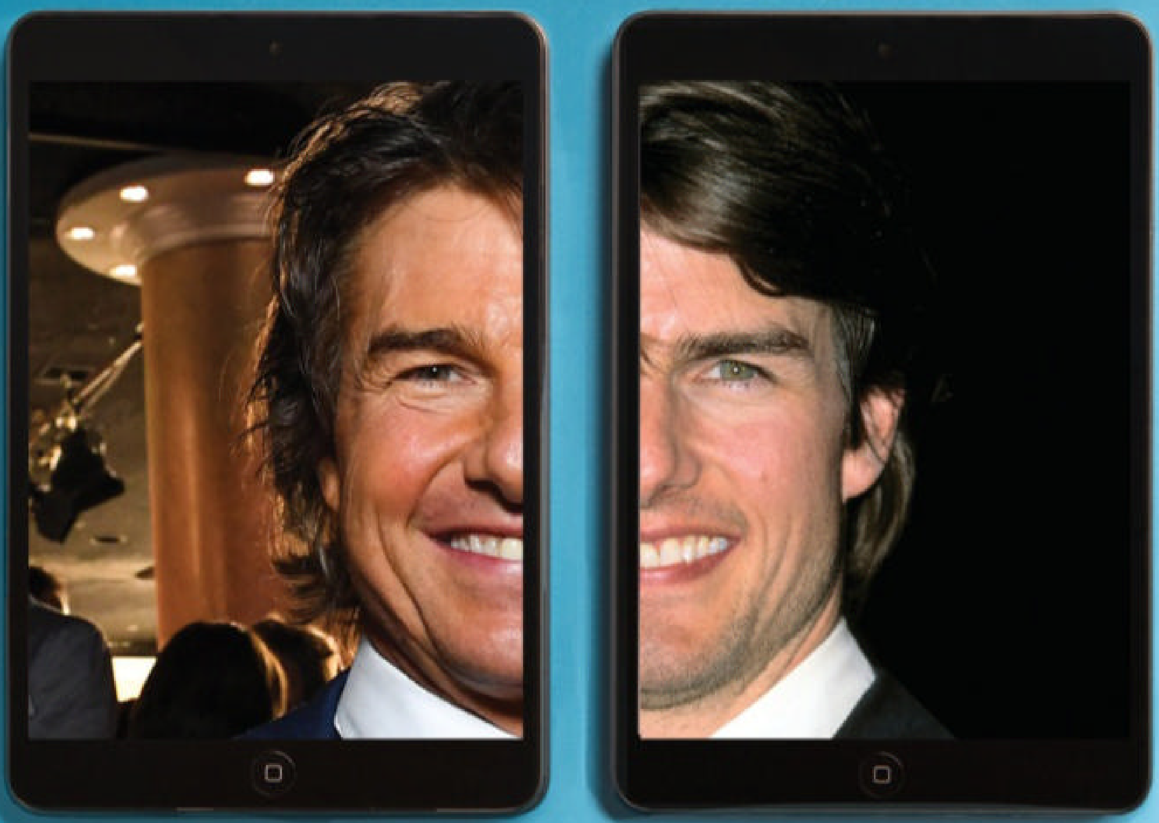
PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY BRIAN D. JOHNSON; LAUREN KOLYN (INKS)



ZEITGEIST

FACE VALUE

The proliferation of photo filters and cosmetic enhancements on social media may be distorting our perception of beauty and aging **By Anne O’Hagan**



Above: Madonna in 2023 (left) and in 1999 (right); lower: Tom Cruise in 2023 (left) and in 1998 (right)

PHOTOGRAPHY, NICK DOLDING/GETTY IMAGES (PHONE BACKGROUND); ROBERT GAUTHIER/GETTY IMAGES (MADONNA 2023); JEFF KRAVITZ/GETTY IMAGES (MADONNA 1999); VALERIE MACON/GETTY IMAGES (CRUISE 2023); STEVE GRANITZ/GETTY IMAGES (CRUISE 1998); PLUME CREATIVE/GETTY IMAGES (COLLAGE)

W

WHEN MADONNA TOOK THE STAGE AT THE 2023 Grammy Awards in February to introduce the icon-smashing hit song "Unholy," the shocker – she is Madonna – wasn't what she wore or what she said, it was her radically altered face. For millions of fans viewing the spectacle of her metamorphosis on the live broadcast, it was a double shocker, since no social-media filtering was involved. Her face was her face.

Living as we do now at the nexus of cosmetic alchemy and the filtered image, perception versus reality is a winless proposition. Sales of plastic surgery and cosmetic procedures reportedly shot up as the pandemic receded. On social media, beauty filters are commonly used by public figures and average Joes. In the era of the photo-editing app Facetune, the number of boomer-aged celebrities on Instagram who look exceptionally, remarkably and sometimes frighteningly youthful is growing.

Madonna's face bears little resemblance to the original Material Girl's. At 64, it's rounded, smoothed, glossed and, quite literally, filled. Fashion designer Vera Wang, 73, appears preternaturally sylph-like with the smooth skin of a tween, her long black hair framing her face Yoko ➤

Ono-style. Actor Salma Hayek, 56, with her wasp waist and prodigious bosom, seems to have the complexion of an eight-year-old. At 77, actor Jaclyn Smith, best known as one of *Charlie's Angels* – a TV show that aired from 1976 to 1981 – looks radiant, glowing and the same (just a whole lot more sculpted). And Joan Collins, a.k.a. Alexis Carrington of *Dynasty* fame, who will turn 90 in May, is a woman with extremely good genes, it seems.

Whether it's filtering or surgery, you don't know what anyone really looks like anymore, apart from Jamie Lee Curtis, 64. It's not encouraging that it's been 20 years since the American actor posed, unretouched, and with no makeup, for *More* magazine in a sports bra and underwear – her personal bid to bust the perfection myth. And it's been six years since *Allure Magazine* banned the term "anti-aging" from its pages. What makes this social trend even more confusing is timing. Just as filtered images dominate social media, the fashion and beauty industries are attempting to become more inclusive, authentic and body positive.

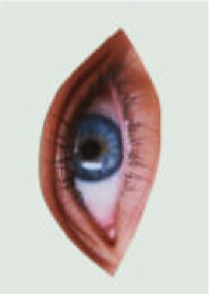
Left to right: Salma Hayek; Vera Wang; Jamie Lee Curtis; Dame Joan Collins; Jaclyn Smith

Paulina Porizkova, 57, the former supermodel-turned-author (her book, *No Filter*, was released last November), has become an anti-ageism guru on Instagram. "Embrace your age" was the message when *Harper's Bazaar* put 76-year-old rock star Patti Smith on its cover – lined face, long tangled grey hair and all. And in January, the CEO of Coty, the global cosmetic consortium, sent an open letter to the world's major dictionary publishers exhorting them to "un-define" beauty, calling the current entries "limiting and exclusive."

STILL, THE WORLD'S got a long way to go. While a deeply wrinkled Mick Jagger, 79, is perceived as a rock 'n' roll rebel to the end, Smith aging "naturally" seems like a heretical act. It's no surprise, since our perceptions have been manipulated for as long as mass media have existed. All our lives, we're fed a steady diet of unrealistic images convincing us how we should look. In the '90s, the glamazon supermodels reigned supreme, until a bone-thin, teenaged Kate Moss hit the runway, tipping fashion towards the waif look and setting body image standards that were aspirational in all the wrong ways. As a trend - dubbed "heroin chic" – it had seismic social implications, blamed for encouraging anorexia, distorting reality and promoting self-harm. Even then U.S. president Bill Clinton denounced it. Today, social media has exponentially intensified the impact of unrealistic images. Filtering has upped the ante.

In Hollywood, where an actor's face is their brand, filters are occupational tools and considered standard entertainment industry practice, but it goes beyond the Instagram feed. When Tom Cruise reprised his role in *Top Gun: Maverick* 36 years after the original, the internet buzzed with praise and speculation about his ageless looks. Dermatology pundits and gossip sites weighed in, as did *Men's Health* magazine ("How Tom Cruise Maintains His Youthful Looks at 59 and You Can Too"). Top tips included paying special attention to diet, mindset and athletic training. Notably absent were mentions of Botox, "nip and tuck" or visual effects.

On a recent episode of *The Town with Matthew Belloni*, an inside Hollywood podcast, the host discussed how stars are de-aged with computer software. Hollywood's open secret for years, it's a practice that's become more prevalent thanks to AI-enabled technology. Although consumers are largely unaware of the process, Belloni's guest, VFX expert Matt Panousis – co-founder of a Toronto company that uses software called Vanity AI – estimated stars are digitally enhanced on screen in 85 per cent of movies. Some actors require a de-aging budget allocation written into their contract before they'll sign.



TODAY'S MOST POPULAR social media platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok, developed so quickly that significant research examining their impact is scant. As an overview, a Statistics Canada survey released in 2021 reports one-fifth of all Canadian social media users aged 15 to 64 had lost sleep, been less physically active or had trouble concentrating as a result of doomscrolling. In more recent smaller studies and media reports, the focus is predominantly on young women, for whom filtered images are a constant and consuming reality, one that can have troubling mental health consequences from low self-esteem to depression. Even Instagram's internal research found that, among ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, SAMIR HUSSEIN/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES (HAYEK); KARWAI TANG/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES (WANG); AXELLE/BAUER-GRIFFIN/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES (CURTIS); DAVID M. BENETT/GETTY IMAGES (COLLINS); RICK KERN/GETTY IMAGES (SMITH); PLUME CREATIVE/GETTY IMAGES (CUT-OUTS)

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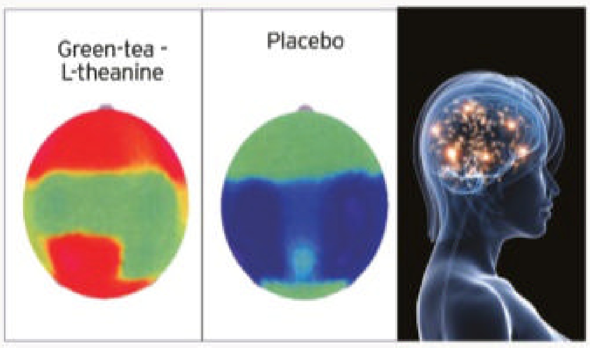
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teen girls who reported dissatisfaction with their bodies in the previous 30 days, about 30 per cent said Instagram made it worse.

In an article originally published in the journal *JAMA Facial Plastic Surgery*, Boston University associate professor of dermatology Dr. Neelam Vashi and her colleagues concluded that filters are at odds with reality. "People can take a photo of themselves and, in an instant, manipulate it," Vashi said in a *psychologytoday.com* story on what's been dubbed Snapchat dysmorphia. "That makes a change feel more real and attainable. It can be argued that these apps are making us lose touch with reality because we expect to look perfectly primped and filtered in real life."

Much has been made in the media of "Instagram face," referring to a singular look that has proliferated among young women, the result of filtering and/or plastic surgery. In Jia Tolentino's words in *The New Yorker*: "It's a young face, of course, with pore-less skin and plump, high cheekbones. It has catlike eyes and long, cartoonish lashes; it has a small, neat nose and full, lush lips. It looks at you coyly but blankly, as if its owner has taken half a Klonopin and is considering asking you for a private-jet ride to Coachella. The face is distinctly white but ambiguously ethnic – it suggests a *National Geographic* composite illustrating what Americans will look like in 2050, if every American of the future were to be a direct descendant of Kim Kardashian West, Bella Hadid, Emily Ratajkowski and Kendall Jenner (who looks exactly like Emily Ratajkowski)."

Instagram face is largely a phenomenon of the millennial generation, of course. But if the assumption is people in mid-life should know better than to fall prey to the dark allure of social media, then think again. Just as it can be useful for disseminating information, social media can also spark envy, warp standards and trigger anxiety. "The pressure is extreme," Toronto dermatologist Dr. Sandy Skotnicki says in a telephone interview. In her practice, patients' requests are often unrealistic and she finds herself "saying 'No' more than 'Yes.'" Skotnicki believes her job is to preserve the "golden ratio," a long-established mathematical formula used to measure the human face for optimal perceived beauty.

Left to right: Patti Smith; Marc Jacobs; Mick Jagger; Paulina Porizkova

FOR A REALITY CHECK, the internet is a dark hole of before-and-after cosmetic alteration shots, but it's the "afters" that become the images of record. Fashion designer Marc Jacobs, 59, defied the status quo when he posted a picture of his bruised face swathed in bandages the day after a deep plane facelift. He told *Vogue*: "In a world where a younger generation is all about transparency, disclosure, and honesty, I don't see why people have this shame around vanity or keeping up with a certain thing. You know, we all retouch and filter our pictures. That's the world we live in."

AND YET, WE BUY IN. We know not every image represents reality and #nofilter is merely rhetorical, so why not take it for what it is – a bit of fantasy and fun? Well, just try it yourself. Download the Facetune app and retouch your image, filter yourself back in time, and you'll quickly understand the power of artifice. When it comes to our self-perception, it seems we're fragile creatures and prone to delusion, too.

"People forget what they looked like a week after they've had a procedure," says Dr. Trevor Born, a cosmetic surgeon with practices in Toronto and Manhattan. "And after a year, they can't believe they ever had a heavy neck or bad skin. It's astounding." This is called "perception drift," a term coined by Dr. Sabrina Fabi, a dermatologist in San Diego, Calif. It's when a person's perception is skewed after having a series of cosmetic procedures, and they're "unable to accurately process their appearance."

So, possibly Madonna drifted. Or perhaps she's fully aware of how she looks, and likes it. Either way, the provocateur par excellence has sparked a conversation about agency and ageism, technology and society's taboos. "I have never apologized for any of the creative choices I have made nor the way that I look or dress and I'm not going to start," Madonna posted on Instagram in response to her critics following her Grammys appearance. "A brilliant provocation" is how Madonna's new face was characterized in the *New York Times*. And in *The Guardian*, journalist Nancy Jo Sales wrote: "Whatever Madonna's being criticized for, that's what she's asking us to examine." Sales' view is that Madonna's latest subject as an artist is ageism. If so, then she's vividly demonstrated our society's intolerance of aging across the board – and especially unfiltered.

PHOTOGRAPHY, TODD OWYOUNG/NBC VIA GETTY IMAGES (SMITH); ROY ROCHLIN/GETTY IMAGES (JAGGER); GILBERT CARRASQUILLO/GC IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES (JACOBS); JAMIE MCCARTHY/GETTY IMAGES (PORIZKOVA); PLUME CREATIVE/GETTY IMAGES (CUT-OUTS)

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SALES PITCH

The revival of Zellers is generating a lot of buzz, but can Zeddy and some Big Z burgers entice shoppers to come back? **By Kim Honey**

THERE ARE SOME MEMORIES that surface, unbidden, at the whiff of perfume, a bar of music or, in some cases, a brand. When Hudson's Bay Company announced it was resurrecting Zellers and adding a website, *Zellers.ca*, the internet was full of reminiscences about the low-cost department store with the distinctive red-and-white logo, a teddy bear mascot named Zeddy and retro restaurants renowned for their hot chicken sandwiches.

The news prompted my life to flash before my eyes in retail vignettes: the Truro, N.S., stores where I shopped for Bonne Bell Lip Smackers as a teen; the Zellers Family Restaurant in Saint John, N.B., where I devoured $1.99 breakfasts in my broke 20s; the Toronto store where I spent a fortune in my 30s on toys, clothes and school supplies for my kids. By my 40s, Zellers was gone and Target had bought up the leases. In my 50s, the Target stores were shuttered, and, during the pandemic, I waited outside an old store in Etobicoke, Ont., while my teenaged son got a vaccine.

A Zellers store in London, Ont., circa 1950

Now I am 60 and, just like that – to borrow the title from the *Sex and the City* reboot – Zellers is back. If you think my trip down memory lane proves retail is fickle, check out the company history: Walter Zeller opened his first store in London, Ont., in 1928 and three more followed. Within a few months, he sold them to an American company, which declared bankruptcy in 1931; Zeller bought back 14 stores and proceeded to build them into a 60-store empire, which was acquired by Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) in 1978. Before Walmart opened in 1994, HBC had some 350 Zellers stores across the country.

Discount department stores come (Giant Tiger, Dollarama, Winners) and go (Woolworth's, Kmart and Kresge's), and that's why HBC's decision to open Zellers shops inside Hudson's Bay stores in 25 small markets may seem like a head-scratcher.

Yes, they are playing the nostalgia card, expecting people like me will pop in to see if there are any bargains, and the marketing campaign – Zeddy tweeting news on @OfficialZellers and Instagram/Facebook posts with black-and-white store photos accompanied by personal stories from former workers – is on fire. They're even sending out food trucks to serve up hot chicken sandwiches and Big Z burgers outside stores when Zellers opens in the spring (no date had been announced at press time).

As a marketing ploy, it may work in the short term, says Matthew Buchko, a New York-based analyst at IBISWorld, a global industry research company. "Nostalgia is a very powerful factor in many markets right now, specifically retail, where consumers want to relive experiences from the past," he writes in an email interview. "A yearning for a simpler time has begun to affect purchasing decisions as customers connect emotionally with these products." In Buchko's 2022 industry report on Canadian department stores, he noted HBC weathered the pandemic well because of its diversified portfolio (it also owns Saks Fifth Avenue and Saks OFF 5TH), but, in the long run, the $27.8-billion industry "is in the decline phase of its economic life cycle" due to competition from the Walmarts, Costcos and Amazons of the world. In March, American luxury retailer Nordstrom Inc. announced it will close all 13 Canadian stores by the end of June and lay off about 2,500 workers.

"I do think the Zellers relaunch is aimed at generating buzz around the company," Buchko said, adding customers were enthusiastic about the pop-up shops HBC opened in two Bay stores in 2021. "The primary benefit seems to be the 'experience' that it will provide for Canadians, which would indicate it is very much a marketing strategy."

Memory is a funny thing. My fondness for Zellers outlives the bargains I scored prowling its aisles, like the Pure Alfred Sung blouse with seams that unravelled a few washes later and a kid's bike that lasted less than a year before the gears jammed.

PHOTOGRAPHY, HBC CORPORATE COLLECTION (VINTAGE STORE FRONT AND FLYERS); BAUERSYNDICATION/TRUNK ARCHIVE (SUPPLIES)

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POLICY

CODE BLUE

As our political leaders finally address our collapsing health-care system, **Alex Roslin** says we're paying the price for ignoring its symptoms for too long

CANADIANS ARE EMERGING FROM the pandemic to find their health system is a hot mess. Six million adults didn't have a family doctor in August 2022, according to an Angus Reid Institute study. Short-staffed hospitals are temporarily shutting emergency and intensive-care units across the country. Wait times for everything from medical procedures to long-term care have soared.

Even before COVID-19 struck, there were chronic problems, but nearly three years of pandemic mayhem have pushed medicare to the brink of collapse, according to Canadian Medical Association president Dr. Alika Lafontaine. "We've been saying for a while that we're concerned about collapse. And in some places, collapse has already happened," he told CBC News in September. "If you can't access services, that literally does mean collapse."

Anyone waiting for government help isn't likely to find much solace. While Lafontaine called for an immediate injection of cash and the hiring of more doctors and nurses, Ottawa and the 13 premiers have been at loggerheads for years over health funding and reforms.

During the September 2021 federal election – in a campaign focused largely on health care – Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised to boost health funding by $25 billion over five years. Apart from a one-time injection of $2 billion in the spring of 2022 to help provinces deal with the Omicron variant, no new money came for two-and-a-half more years as the health system crumbled.

Ottawa wanted the provinces to agree to health-care reforms, such as improved data collection and sharing, since Canada has woefully poor information on basic health indicators such as wait times, staff shortages and patient outcomes, which health experts say are critical to improving the system.

The premiers insisted that new funds come with no strings attached and demanded an immediate $28-billion increase in annual federal health transfer payments to the provinces, with a six per cent annual increase thereafter, to make up for past underfunding and to meet the increasing needs of the aging population.

In February, Trudeau finally coughed up $46.2 billion in new health funds over *10* years, including $25 billion for bilateral funding deals to be worked out with premiers, but is only providing an immediate $2 billion Canada Health Transfer (CHT) top-up "to address immediate pressures on the health-care system." (In 2021, the total CHT was $45 billion.) The funds fall far short of what provinces sought; they'll just "come close to addressing inflation," Kevin Smith, president of Toronto's University Health Network, told the *Globe and Mail*. "It won't come close to addressing massive transformation."

AT THE CANADIAN Health Coalition, Steven Staples watched the interminable political infighting and was ripping his hair out. "We need to see some health-care champions out there. What we've seen instead is constant fighting," says Staples, policy and advocacy director at the Ottawa non-profit that fights for improved public health care. "We've taken our health-care system for ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, TOM SCHIERLITZ/TRUNK ARCHIVE

THE PREMIERS OF CANADA

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announces the health funding deal with the provinces at a Feb. 7 meeting with Canada's premiers in Ottawa. To repair the damage done to our health-care system, Trudeau must work closely with the provincial and territorial first ministers: (above, from left to right) P.J. Akeeagok, Nunavut; Andrew Furey, N.L.; Scott Moe, Sask.; Danielle Smith, Alta.; Ranj Pillai, Yukon; Dennis King P.E.I.; David Eby, B.C.; Caroline Cochrane, N.W.T.; Blaine Higgs, N.B.; Tim Houston, N.S.; François Legault, Que.; Doug Ford, Ont.; Heather Stefanson, Man.

granted for many years. We're paying for it now."

Staples blames both levels of government for years of underfunding, but especially faults premiers for mismanaging and steadily privatizing health care while insisting on no-strings-attached federal funding. "We need overall funding to go up, but we also need data for benchmarks," he says, "and we need accountability that the provinces will use new money for health. Health funding now just goes to provinces' general funds."

Amid the turmoil, Canadians have lost faith in Canada's much-vaunted health-care system. Only 37 per cent were confident they could get urgent care in a timely way, compared to 70 per cent of Americans, according to the same Angus Reid online survey of 2,279 Canadians and 1,209 Americans in August. Canadians were four times more likely than Americans to say it was very difficult or impossible to access emergency care and diagnostic tests, while 51 per cent said a close friend or family member had suffered due to a lack of adequate care.

BILL VANGORDER IS GETTING AN earful about health care from his members at CARP, Canada's largest advocacy organization for people aged 45 and up (and a not-for-profit affiliate of ZoomerMedia). "Our members are horribly upset with the difficul- ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, CREDITS ON PAGE 66

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- ☑ Fought to replace Ontario Minister and Deputy Minister of Long-Term Care
- ☑ Fought to raise CPP amounts
- ☑ Fought for increased fines and penalties for Ontario long-term care homes that failed inspection
- ☑ Fought for one-time payments worth $7.4 billion to alleviate financial hardship of GIS recipients who received CERB
- ☑ Fought for high-dose flu vaccine availability at no charge (Ontario, Yukon, NB, PEI)
- ☑ Fought for negotiated settlement between Ontario government and optometrists
- ☑ Fought to create separate Ministry of Long-Term Care in NS

CARP DEMANDS FOR 2023!

- ☐ Aim higher for improved health-care access and reduce wait times to match best performers in OECD
- ☐ Assure provinces enforce national service standards for long-term care homes
- ☐ Provide significantly more funding for home care
- ☐ Exempt in-home caregiver services from the HST
- ☐ Fully fund high-dose flu, shingles and pneumococcal vaccines for all people over 65
- ☐ Boost OAS by 10% for those over 65 (not just for those over 75)
- ☐ Increase CPP Survivors Pension by 25% for those over 65
- ☐ Eliminate mandatory RRIF withdrawals
- ☐ Create more opportunities for co-housing and other affordable housing for seniors
- ☐ Fight societal ageism and change attitudes about aging in Canada

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ties of accessing care. I've never heard people so angry at the system," says VanGorder, CARP's chief operating and policy officer.

After Canada's devastating failure to protect seniors from COVID – which included one of the world's highest death rates in long-term care as a portion of the country's total deaths – VanGorder says his members expected Canadian governments to follow through on their vows to do better.

"There's been a lot of talk, but very little action. Seniors are worse off, more vulnerable and at higher risk than they were before COVID," he says.

U**NSURPRISINGLY, HEALTH STAFF** are voting with their feet. Labour shortages that struck other sectors have slammed health care particularly hard, fuelled by interminable chaos and COVID risks. "I don't know what the right word is – collapse, or chaos, or strained. At the end of the day, things are bad," says Dr. Melanie Bechard, an emergency pediatrician at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa.

"I've seen patients who've waited more than 15 hours to see me in the emergency department," says Bechard. "I've seen a lot of health-care workers who are dealing with a lot of stress and moral injury from seeing people suffering in these circumstances."

Bechard's nightmare is that a patient in her ER suffers a "harmful or devastating" deterioration because of a long wait, which has already happened in New Brunswick. In July, a man died in a Fredericton hospital ER waiting room, prompting Premier Blaine Higgs to fire Health Minister Dorothy Shephard. As of December, four other deaths occurred in the province's ER waiting rooms, leading opposition leaders to call for improvements in hospital care.

Also in July, a senior died of a heart attack in an Ashcroft, B.C., care home, which was next door to a local hospital whose emergency department was temporarily closed; the nearest ambulance was more than 30 minutes away. Less than a month later, a second Ashcroft senior died of a heart attack; again, the nearest paramedics were more than half an hour away.

The solution isn't just spending more, says Bechard, who is also chair of the board of Canadian Doctors for Medicare, which advocates for improved public health care. She says costs to Canadians are driven higher because public medicare doesn't cover major health services such as prescription drugs and care for seniors. It pays for some costs in each area, but individuals usually pay for the bulk of expenses.

Take care for seniors, for instance. Canada's spending on home care as a portion of gross domestic product is one of the lowest of 38 countries that be-

> “I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE RIGHT WORD IS – COLLAPSE, OR CHAOS, OR STRAINED. AT THE END OF THE DAY, **THINGS ARE BAD**”
>
> *Dr. Melanie Bechard, an emergency pediatrician at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario in Ottawa*

PHOTOGRAPHY, THE CANADIAN PRESS/JUSTIN TANG (AKEEAGOK); COURTESY OF PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS (FUREY, MOE, PILLAI, EBY, COCHRANE, HOUSTON, FORD, STEFANSON); TODD KOROL/REUTERS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (SMITH); CHRIS WATTIE/REUTERS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (KING); CARLOS OSORIO/REUTERS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (HIGGS); MARIO BEAUREGARD BEAUSTOCK/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (LEGAULT); THE CANADIAN PRESS/ADRIAN WELD (TRUDEAU)

long to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The result: Many seniors who would prefer to stay at home are forced into long-term care, which costs about three times more.

CANADIANS SPEND MORE on prescription drugs than almost every OECD country, but they could save $5 billion a year by 2027 if there were a universal pharmacare program, according to an Ottawa-appointed panel's 2019 report. Drug costs would go down if the government could negotiate bulk buying of medications.

More savings would come from reducing the number of people who skip prescriptions because of the expense and then wind up with health complications. Eliminating out-of-pocket costs for medications for just three diseases – diabetes, heart disease and respiratory conditions – could save the health system up to $1.2 billion per year in reduced ER visits and hospitalizations, the panel said.

Bechard's group is lobbying the Liberal government to follow through on its long-promised national pharmacare program. "That is probably the most indefensible gap we have in medicare right now," she says.

VanGorder agrees on the need for expanded programs and smarter spending. His members have had it with the cratering health system and will hold elected leaders accountable. "We're urging members to get in touch with their local political representatives and make sure they understand this is an issue that's going to form the basis of their voting decisions."

THE ZOOMER POLL

DO YOU HAVE FAITH THAT OUR FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL LEADERS WILL BE ABLE TO PUT THEIR POLITICAL DIFFERENCES ASIDE AND GET TO WORK REPAIRING OUR BROKEN HEALTH-CARE SYSTEM?

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PROUDLY CANADIAN

HAPPINESS

PET CAUSE

Animal companions are good for seniors' health, so why is it so hard to rescue and keep one?

By Rona Maynard

AS THE WORLD MOURNED THE QUEEN, I kept thinking of the dogs she'd left behind. My Facebook feed brimmed with cartoons of despondent corgis; one pup, depicted with a tear rolling down its face, went viral. The future of the pack seemed personal to me. I intend to grow old with paw prints on my sheets and a soft muzzle resting on my knee. But the Queen had Prince Andrew to take in her dogs and provide every canine comfort. My son is not keen on dogs.

My husband Paul and I were 65, our notion of late middle age, when we rescued our first dog. Then a goofy adolescent of 14 months, Casey shook us out of a rut. We laughed more and worried less. Paul got out of his chair to go exploring with Casey, and his blood pressure numbers took a sharp turn for the better. At 73, we've slowed down a bit, but Casey still gets a daily hour of exercise with each of his humans. Now a lively oldster in his 10th year, he has brought us more joy than any of our childhood pets and inspired my new memoir, *Starter Dog: My Path to Joy, Belonging and Loving This World*.

If a drug could do for seniors what beloved pets do, it would be a sure winner. Pets keep older adults healthier and happier, according to study after study. They improve morale, reduce depression and keep stress in check. Seniors with animals take less medication and make fewer visits to the doctor, because they have a friend beside them to ward off loneliness and ease the pain of bereavement. The Queen was well into her 90s, grieving the loss of Prince Philip, when her last dogs joined the royal household.

If we're serious about keeping seniors well, we'd acknowledge the role of their animals. Yet they don't even rate a mention on a Canadian government website about age-friendly communities, while affordable housing figures prominently (with well-lit sidewalks, health care and recreation close by). What's more, many landlords and retirement homes will not accept animals. For people facing a move or no longer able to manage on their own, the only option is to give up a cherished family member – perhaps the only one within reach. How age-friendly is that?

"Older age is the most important time of life for people to have companion animals," says Ardra Cole, a professor of education at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax and the founder of ElderDog Canada, a national charity devoted to keeping seniors and their dogs together. At 69, Cole has loved dogs all her life and paid a researcher's attention to the comfort they give other seniors. Her 2019 study, "Grow Old Along with Me," followed 14 seniors, aged 60 to 99, for a year, capturing both the power and the poignancy of loving a pet in later life. With no children needing attention or teammates waiting at work, seniors find a sense of purpose in caring for a creature that asks for nothing but food, exercise and affection. A woman in the study coined a name for this bond: "joyful responsibility." It's the umbrella held over a pup who hates the rain, the blanket and toy positioned just so at night. At Cole's house, it was the motorized platform her husband built to get an old dog up the stairs.

MANY BARRIERS KEEP seniors and animals apart. If you don't drive or live near public transit, try finding a cab that will take your best friend to the vet, where services add up fast. Last year, our dog's care set us back more than $2,000 in office visits, vaccinations, tests and medications. (We were lucky: It can cost thousands more just to diagnose a complex problem.) And those daily bowls of food wreak further budgetary havoc, especially for those on fixed incomes. Canadian data compiled last year by Statista, an online market research company, set a year's worth of cat food at $576 and dog food at $1,200. "People will feed their pet before they feed themselves," says Mella Brown, co-founder of Through Ruff Times, a Toronto charity serving pet parents in need.

SOME ANIMAL LOVERS give up hope of ever sharing their lives with a pet. Walking my downtown neighbourhood, I sometimes chat with a dignified septuagenarian who melts at the sight of my dog and wishes he could love one of his own. But with a disabled partner, and his only relative more than 3,000 kilometres away, he has no backup if he falls ill or dies.

No one wants to see a pet left behind. For the sake of animal welfare, some rescue organizations exclude seniors. A friend of mine, at 67, was approved for the adoption of a cat, then ghosted while the cat remained on the rescue site. She had made no secret of her age and can think of no other reason why she lost out on the cat. Chastened, she took no chances on a subsequent application for two cats listed on a different site. After knocking two years off her age, she received an appointment to collect the new family members. But when my friend and her white-haired husband arrived at the appointed hour, they received a frosty reception. The woman who handed them over looked the couple up and down with dismay, then muttered, "I know about people your age."

By any reasonable standard, this retired couple's home is cat heaven. The two have plenty of time for snuggling with their pets. With years of responsible adulthood behind them, they understand commitment. They have provided for the cats in their will and ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, HEATHER POLLOCK (CASEY); ALINAMD/GETTY IMAGES (CHEW BALL); UROSHPETROVIC/GETTY IMAGES (BISCUIT); LIUDMILA CHERNETSKA/GETTY IMAGES (MOUSE, BALL); MEHMETTORLAK/GETTY IMAGES (COLLAR)

lined up a friend to adopt them should the need arise. Yet, in the eyes of the woman who grudgingly released the cats, they should have been disqualified. At the mention of their friend, she demanded, “Is your friend the same age as you?”

AGE HAS LITTLE BEARING on contingency plans for animals. My friend Sarah, young enough to be my daughter, promised her father she would take his dog, Jynxi, if his circumstances changed. Roger was 74, and newly in love with the rescue mutt his daughters found after the death of their mother. Man and dog blossomed together: He taught her to fetch, she got him socializing with his neighbours. After years of depression and anxiety, he would phone his daughters with glowing reports on his latest adventures with Jynxi. “She saved his soul,” recalls Sarah.

Roger and Jynxi were a team for three years. As far as his daughters could tell, they were still getting started, but then his physical and cognitive health declined quickly. Some retirement homes will accept small pets, but Roger’s only option, a memory care unit, would not welcome Jynxi, except on short visits that proved more stressful than cheering. Stricken with guilt for “abandoning” his dog, Roger kept apologizing to her and eventually stopped responding. Meanwhile, the sisters agonized over her future.

Sarah had taken Jynxi in, fulfilling a promise to her father, but she missed socializing on impulse with her friends. A dog in residence, even one as lovable as Jynxi, was proving too big an obligation, and her sister Julie’s apartment was too small to accommodate a dog as well as a home-based accessory business. A neighbour offered Jynxi a home, but, in the end, Julie stepped up and moved to a bigger apartment. Once again, the dog has a constant companion who adores her.

RONA MAYNARD
Starter Dog
My Path to Joy, Belonging and Loving This World

The author with Casey

WHEN I STILL CALLED myself middle-aged, Casey once knocked me flat on my face while leaping to defend us from a giant Halloween ghost. Paul and I hope he’ll stay with us till we’re 76 or so – too old to be taking any chances with rambunctious canine bruisers. Our next dog will be a gentle senior, small enough for back-friendly lifting. I’m educating myself on the charities that help seniors keep their pets or find them new forever homes. I take heart from a woman in Cole’s study, who said, at 99, “I am a bit unsteady but, when I walk with Prayer, I’m not nearly so unsteady. We’re slow but we’re out and walking.”

FRIENDS IN NEED

All seniors deserve access to programs like these, but for now it depends where you live. Your local humane society may know of other services in your area.

■ **ELDERDOG CANADA** “Pawds” in seven provinces offer an array of free services both everyday (walking, brushing, pet food delivery, transportation to the vet or groomer) and urgent (respite care for a hospital stay); and ElderDog will rehome senior dogs. To be assured of a loving home for any dog you can no longer care for, register with their long-term care program. *elderdog.ca*

■ **MY GRANDFATHER’S CAT** Serving seniors facing terminal illness or a move to assisted living, this national charity arranges homes for both cats and dogs. The goal: keeping the pet with its human until the very last day. Free. *mygrandfatherscat.ca*

■ **PET ASSIST CALGARY** Regular volunteers provide friendship to local seniors and “practical kindness,” such as walks or litter changes, to their pets. On an as-needed basis, drivers pick up supplies and take pets to the vet, at no charge. *programsforelderly.com*

■ **THROUGH RUFF TIMES (Toronto only)** Volunteers foster pets for up to three months when owners of any age are struggling. During the stay, they send updates and photos. Also on offer: free food and litter. *breakawaycs.ca*

■ **THE FARLEY FOUNDATION (Ontario only)** Low-income people facing veterinary crises can apply for subsidies (up to $1,000) at clinics where at least one doctor belongs to the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association. *farleyfoundation.org*

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GARDENING

Backyard Bounty

A kitchen garden is not just focused on food production. It's a more whimsical space for growing herbs, veggies, pollinator plants and flowers prized for their beauty, taste and ecological function.

HOW TO ENSURE YOUR KITCHEN GARDEN FLOURISHES

By Leanne Delap

WE BEGAN WORRYING about access to fresh food during the pandemic, and now, in 2023, our grocery bills are jaw-dropping, as food prices rise faster than inflation, at an estimated five to seven per cent a year. The obvious answer: Start a kitchen garden. A 2020 study of about 1,000 Canadians by the Agri-Food Analytics Lab at Dalhousie University in Halifax found one in five Canadians started growing their own food in 2020, and about half the population is growing at least one kind of fruit or vegetable today.

Hard times breed ingenuity, and today's kitchen gardens harken back to relief gardens planted during the Great Depression and the backyard victory gardens sowed during both world wars. Promoted by the government as a patriotic contribution, there were some 209,000 victory gardens across Canada in 1944, producing 57 million kilograms (125.7 million pounds) of vegetables each year.

After many years as a single mother living in rental properties, I went big with my food-provisioning fantasies last year after my husband and I bought a farm in Huron County, Ont. Suddenly, I had the boundless potential to grow food, and it made me realize I should have been doing it, at any scale, a long time ago. We started small, as the big fields were overwhelming. Still, the first season's bounty from a patch of raised beds – dwarfed by our five hectares (12 acres) – was ridiculously rewarding, and kept us fed for the summer and fall. It produced so much that I had to share the harvest, which allowed me to meet my neighbours, learn about rural hospitality and how sharing the wealth builds community. You don't go anywhere in farm country without a basket of peaches or a bag of corn or kale in your hand. It was pretty profound stuff that grew from some digging and sowing and weeding. If you don't have your own patch of land, fear not: Old-fashioned allotment and community gardens are a great option. Allotments are plots, usually on municipal land, that you have to apply for to tend and pay rent, while community gardens are a group project where people reap what they sow in labour. (Toronto's *Foodshare.net* is a good resource if you want to start, or participate in, a community garden project.)

Homesteading has exploded on social media, where aspirational lifestyle gurus – with pantries reassuringly stacked with colour-coordinated preserves – tout sustainability and self-reliance, and parade their savings at the till. It has trickled down to less committed kitchen gardeners, who are showing an interest in heirloom and native seeds, closed-loop food waste systems and preserving in-season ingredients.

You don't need a huge backyard to start a kitchen garden. From grow-light systems for indoor growing to container gardening and raised beds, kitchen gardens are scalable. Here is some practical advice if you are taking up a trowel for the first time, or refining a lifelong food-production hobby.

WHAT TO PLANT

One thing I discovered when I started growing food is that gardening enthusiasts will talk your ears off about what works and what doesn't, so ➤

An indoor kitchen garden is only limited by your imagination.

PHOTOGRAPHY, HELEN RUSHBROOK/STOCKSY (VEGETABLES); KWANGMOOZAA/GETTY IMAGES (PAPER); BG COLLECTION/GALLERY STOCK/TRUNK ARCHIVE (WALL PLANTERS)

avail yourself of the expertise, whether it's from garden centre staff or neighbours tending their own plots. I had great success with the easier stuff: tomatoes and cucumbers, zucchini, pumpkins, beans, peas, radishes, peppers of all kinds, chards and lettuces. And my kale survived a brutal winter with just a little tent of plastic. Can you imagine how rewarding it is to pick kale in Canada when it's -12 C? For the OG source for planting, buy the Canadian edition of *The Old Farmer's Almanac* or check out (*almanac.com*) for the best combinations of plants and flowers to deter pests without using harmful chemical pesticides.

If you are new to gardening, first you have to determine your plant hardiness zone (*planthardiness.gc.ca*), which will tell you what to grow, when to plant and when to harvest.

In the last few years, the big trend is raised beds, and most nurseries, big box stores and online retailers like Amazon sell kits you can install and fill with a mix of organic filler, soil and compost. My husband built our raised cedar beds, which was a fairly simple and satisfying project, and I'm betting they will last a couple of decades. These are easier to tend, because there is less kneeling, crouching and bending, and you can generally get away with fewer soil amendments (adjustments to raise and lower pH, and improve aeration, drainage and moisture retention). If you're planting in your own dirt, buy a soil-testing kit so you know how heathy it is and what you need to enrich it and grow beautiful fruit and veg.

YOU CAN'T HAVE fruits and vegetables without pollinators, and there is a grim future for Earth if we don't save the bees, birds and bugs. Actor Morgan Freeman, 85, converted his 50-hectare (124-acre) Mississippi ranch into a bee sanctuary, planting lavender and magnolia to feed and shelter the insects, and setting up about two dozen hives he tends himself. To figure out which plants feed pollinators, go to *pollinator.org*. The North American Pollinator Project has regional planting guides where you just plug in your postal code.

> "Much of the thrill of playing in the dirt is about growing food the way it's been done for 10,000 years"

SMALL SPACES

Leafy greens, herbs and sprouts are generally the best choices for indoor or window box gardens, but it really depends on your commitment level. There are endless options for indoor grow lights, and *The Old Farmer's Almanac* breaks it down: Fluorescent lights supplement natural window light; energy-efficient LED lights are good for bulk growing and save on electricity costs; high-intensity discharge lights are pro quality, produce a lot of heat and are expensive to operate. While much of the thrill of playing in the dirt is about growing food the way it's been done for 10,000 years, the future of food is in technology, and it can be harnessed to grow provisions in small or dark spaces. There are nifty containers that make balcony gardens viable, with maximized yield. Lee Valley offers a line of UV-resistant plastic container gardens called Vegepod, with a removable and permeable mesh cover (to protect plants from pests) and a built-in reservoir that provides water when you are away. You can grow small to medium vegetables in the units.

COMPOST

In many urban areas, food-waste guilt has been offloaded into green bins. But these compost programs are really very expensive – Toronto, for instance, pays $80 million a year to collect organics and put them through anaerobic digestion. Because of the cost, many communities, large and small, do not have green bins. ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, HELEN RUSHBROOK/STOCKSY

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Wouldn't it be great to take your food scraps and turn them into fertilizer? Outdoor composters have traditionally been ill-suited to city life, since they are smelly magnets for bugs and rodents. This is where eco-entrepreneurs Elizabeth Coulombe and Valérie Laliberté come in. The Montrealers created Tero, a countertop composter, while they were studying product design at the University of Laval. "When food gets thrown away, it ends up in landfills and creates methane, a greenhouse gas much more potent than carbon dioxide," Coulombe says in a Zoom interview. The bonus is Tero takes 95 per cent of food waste, including meat and bones. There is no smell, and it operates quietly, turning a week's worth of waste into ready-to-use fertilizer in about four hours a week. The only downside is the price – from $695 – but it is heavy-duty and durable, and you only need to replace filters over time.

If you have the space, I personally recommend the dual batch rolling composter from Lee Valley, which turns yard waste and food scraps into compost in four to six weeks. It's an above-ground barrel with two compartments (so you can have batches ready at different times) that you spin every few days. You can't put cooked food and animal bones into a manual system: It runs best on vegetable trimmings, but if you have a kitchen garden, those do add up!

INVESTMENT PIECES

Horticulturalist Peg Brule tends a one-hectare (two-acre) garden on her 100-hectare (250-acre) farm just outside Richmond, near Ottawa. She is the long-time content-marketing specialist for Lee Valley in the garden, home and kitchen areas. She helped pick out a few items for beginner gardeners, and a couple of aspirational investments for established gardeners to drool over.

Tools of the trade

First up is the brand's self-watering seed kit. "It's foolproof, and there is no transplant shock," says Brule, referring to the setbacks seedlings suffer when transferred from sprouting mediums to the ground. She also recommends a journal to record what grows well and what doesn't so you don't repeat a failed crop, and Lee Valley's journal has technique and soil info sprinkled throughout the 10-year diary. Brule suggests your first purchase should be a trowel, and to try a few to see how they feel in your hand. "It's an extension of your hand when it comes to closer work. You can remove dead plants and weeds and make soil amendments." You will need some mid-length digging tools, like a trenching hoe, bed rake, crack weeder, three-prong cultivator and a bulb planter. A hand-loop weeder is useful for a congested garden bed, she says, as the rigid, stainless-steel blade allows for targeted weeding. Also: You can't get by without a garden hose. "Lightweight is more practical, but it depends on how much land you are watering."

For "the world's most highly regarded" hand pruners, Brule recommends Felco, which she calls the best choice for the serious gardeners. Invest in brass Y shut-off valves and quick-connect couplers for your hoses, because they are long-lasting and easier to work with if your fingers are less dextrous.

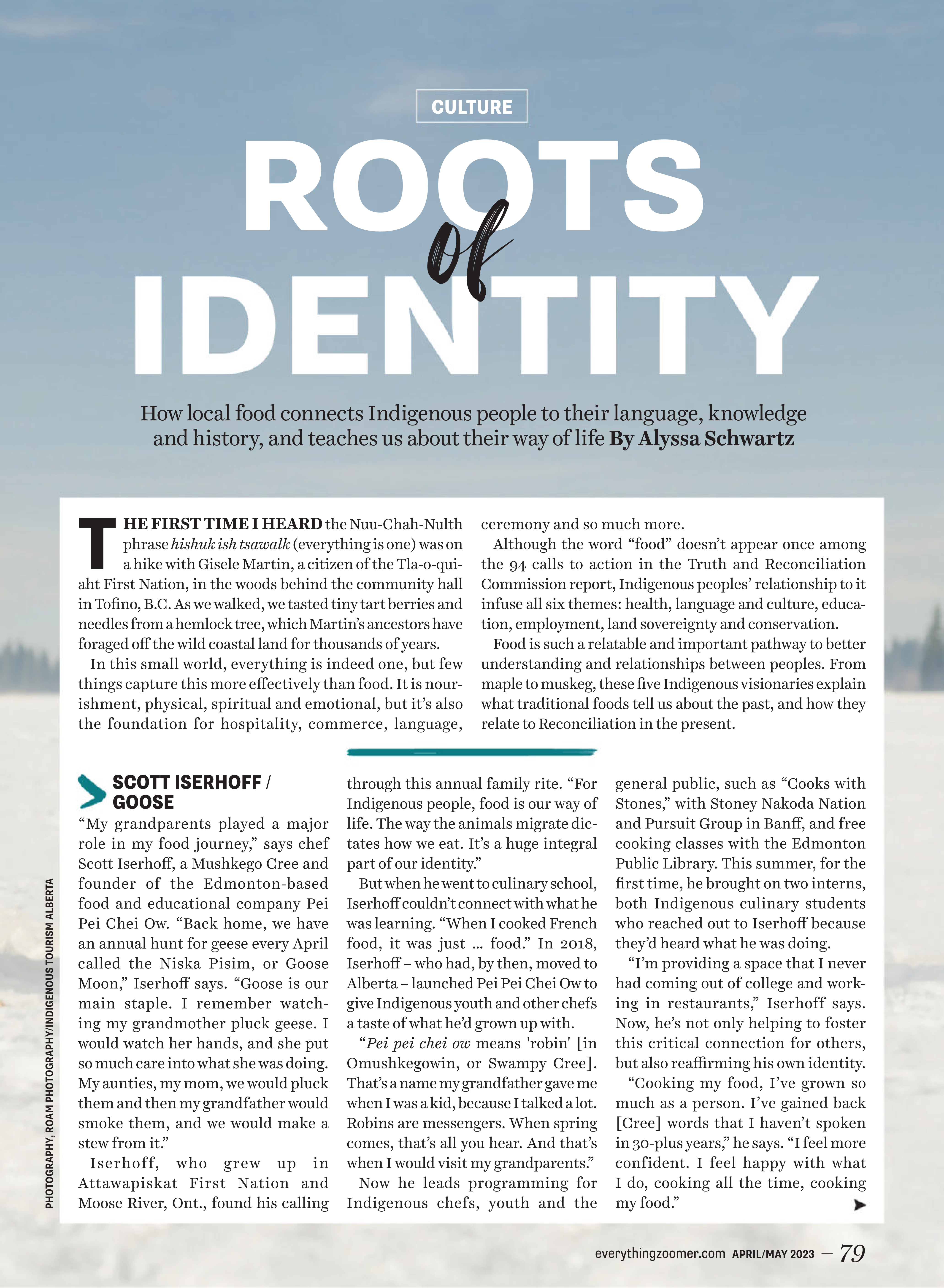
"Gardening is hard on a body. As we get older, it gets more difficult," says Brule. She says Radius hand tools are more ergonomic and lightweight, and suggests looking for a larger handle on your trowel so you don't need to grip as hard.

Brule says one purchase you won't regret is a folding kneeler stool with a tool holder. It keeps your knees dry and helps with stiffness when you are weeding for long periods of time. Flipped around, a kneeler is a handy seat. Raised beds, and drip irrigation systems, are also time and energy savers, ideal for older gardeners.

PHOTOGRAPHY, JAMES ROSS/STOCKSY (RAINBOW CHARD); BAUERSYNDICATION/TRUNK ARCHIVE (SHELF)

> “Wouldn’t it be great to take your food scraps and turn them into fertilizer?”

Iserhoff cooks out on the frozen Astotin Lake at Elk Island National Park, Alta.



CULTURE

ROOTS *of* IDENTITY

How local food connects Indigenous people to their language, knowledge and history, and teaches us about their way of life **By Alyssa Schwartz**

THE FIRST TIME I HEARD the Nuu-Chah-Nulth phrase *hishuk ish tsawalk* (everything is one) was on a hike with Gisele Martin, a citizen of the Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation, in the woods behind the community hall in Tofino, B.C. As we walked, we tasted tiny tart berries and needles from a hemlock tree, which Martin's ancestors have foraged off the wild coastal land for thousands of years.

In this small world, everything is indeed one, but few things capture this more effectively than food. It is nourishment, physical, spiritual and emotional, but it's also the foundation for hospitality, commerce, language, ceremony and so much more.

Although the word "food" doesn't appear once among the 94 calls to action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, Indigenous peoples' relationship to it infuse all six themes: health, language and culture, education, employment, land sovereignty and conservation.

Food is such a relatable and important pathway to better understanding and relationships between peoples. From maple to muskeg, these five Indigenous visionaries explain what traditional foods tell us about the past, and how they relate to Reconciliation in the present.

SCOTT ISERHOFF / GOOSE

"My grandparents played a major role in my food journey," says chef Scott Iserhoff, a Mushkego Cree and founder of the Edmonton-based food and educational company Pei Pei Chei Ow. "Back home, we have an annual hunt for geese every April called the Niska Pisim, or Goose Moon," Iserhoff says. "Goose is our main staple. I remember watching my grandmother pluck geese. I would watch her hands, and she put so much care into what she was doing. My aunties, my mom, we would pluck them and then my grandfather would smoke them, and we would make a stew from it."

Iserhoff, who grew up in Attawapiskat First Nation and Moose River, Ont., found his calling through this annual family rite. "For Indigenous people, food is our way of life. The way the animals migrate dictates how we eat. It's a huge integral part of our identity."

But when he went to culinary school, Iserhoff couldn't connect with what he was learning. "When I cooked French food, it was just ... food." In 2018, Iserhoff – who had, by then, moved to Alberta – launched Pei Pei Chei Ow to give Indigenous youth and other chefs a taste of what he'd grown up with.

"*Pei pei chei ow* means 'robin' [in Omushkegowin, or Swampy Cree]. That's a name my grandfather gave me when I was a kid, because I talked a lot. Robins are messengers. When spring comes, that's all you hear. And that's when I would visit my grandparents."

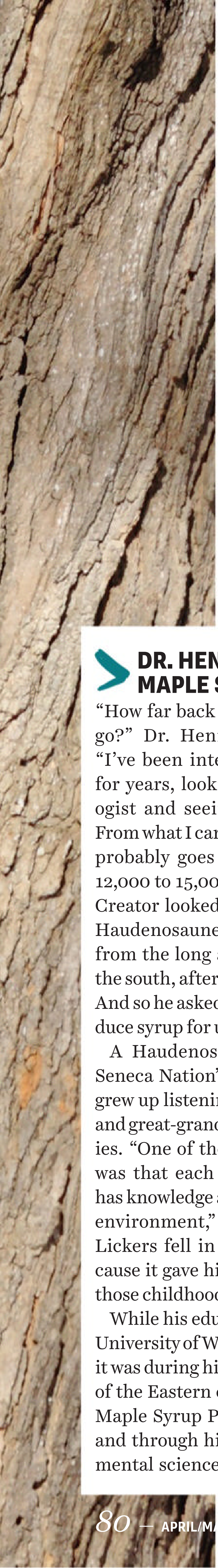
Now he leads programming for Indigenous chefs, youth and the general public, such as "Cooks with Stones," with Stoney Nakoda Nation and Pursuit Group in Banff, and free cooking classes with the Edmonton Public Library. This summer, for the first time, he brought on two interns, both Indigenous culinary students who reached out to Iserhoff because they'd heard what he was doing.

"I'm providing a space that I never had coming out of college and working in restaurants," Iserhoff says. Now, he's not only helping to foster this critical connection for others, but also reaffirming his own identity.

"Cooking my food, I've grown so much as a person. I've gained back [Cree] words that I haven't spoken in 30-plus years," he says. "I feel more confident. I feel happy with what I do, cooking all the time, cooking my food."

➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, ROAM PHOTOGRAPHY/INDIGENOUS TOURISM ALBERTA



Lickers by the St. Lawrence River in Cornwall, Ont.

DR. HENRY LICKERS / MAPLE SYRUP

"How far back does the use of maple go?" Dr. Henry Lickers chuckles. "I've been interpreting the legends for years, looking at them as a biologist and seeing what I can glean. From what I can tell, our maple legend probably goes back to the Ice Age, 12,000 to 15,000 years ago. When the Creator looked down, he saw us, the Haudenosaunee people, really tired from the long arduous journey from the south, after the glaciers retreated. And so he asked the maple tree to produce syrup for us, to give us strength."

A Haudenosaunee citizen of the Seneca Nation's Turtle Clan, Lickers grew up listening to his grandparents and great-grandmother tell these stories. "One of the things they stressed was that each one of those legends has knowledge about how to live in the environment," he says. As an adult, Lickers fell in love with science because it gave him a framework for all those childhood learnings.

While his education took him to the University of Waikato in New Zealand, it was during his decades as a member of the Eastern chapter of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association, and through his work as an environmental science officer and a director of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, that he tapped into what he believes is the greatest opportunity to protect the maple tree from the destructive forces of climate change and deforestation.

"When I talk to people who live off the land, they see the Earth as their mother. It's just like talking to my grandfather. It made me realize, 'Holy smokes, colonizers believe what I believe.'" That aha moment helped Lickers to crystalize the naturalized knowledge system, a way to share environmental expertise between young and old, settlers and Indigenous people, rooted in the Haudenosaunee's Great Law of Peace (a foundation for democratic governance), that he had contemplated most of his life. Lickers used this framework to promote collaboration between maple syrup producers, and he frequently speaks about it in lectures at business schools and conferences. (He also leans on it in his current role as the first Indigenous commissioner for the International Joint Commission, the Canadian-U.S. organization that manages lakes and rivers shared by both countries.)

For generations, the Haudenosaunee used sealed birch bark containers to engineer a reverse osmosis effect to purify syrup; iron pots and steel needles brought by settlers made the now-common process much easier. Lickers says there's much to be learned from collaboration, a common practice among syrup producers, both Indigenous and settlers, in his region.

"They say knowledge is powerful, but for us knowledge is powerful only if it's shared," he says. "You have to have reciprocity. You each have to benefit. The way we share knowledge – you can implement that all the way down to the individual sugar bush." ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANY HILDEBRAND (LICKERS); ORCHIDPOET/GETTY IMAGES (MAPLE)

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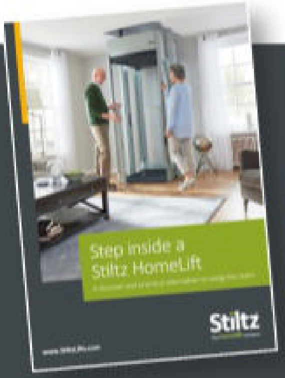

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Fraser Erasmus (left) concocts tea from muskeg flowers, such as these, which she gathers in the Mackenzie Valley, N.W.T.

LILA FRASER ERASMUS / MUSKEG TEA

"I would like to go up and down the Mackenzie Valley, making sure that everyone understands and has access to medicine and knows how to make their own," says Lila Fraser Erasmus, who owns and operates Naturally Dene in Yellowknife.

A descendant of the Dene Cree from Fort Chipewyan, Alta., on her father's side, and a member of the Nacho Nyak Dun Wolf Clan from Mayo, Yukon, on her mother's, Fraser Erasmus says it's not the scarcity of ingredients that grow in the boreal forest around her home that make it so difficult for Dene to practise generations-old healing practices. It's the knowledge required to do so.

Take tea made from muskeg, one of the most abundant and commonly used plants in her region. "It keeps cough away, clears up colds and congestion," she says. "And it's evergreen. You can get muskeg tea all year round. Early June is when the new growth starts. When the snow melts and everything starts to go green and the juices start to flow, you'll see these white little tufts of flowers. Those are really great for skin conditions, really nice in teas."

For Fraser Erasmus, who holds a master's degree in dispute resolution and previously worked as an assistant negotiator and manager of community justice for the Northwest Territories government, harvesting and using muskeg tea has connected her to the teachings of her Ancestors. "We're filled with knowledge, but that knowledge doesn't come from a textbook," she says. "As Dene, we walk with guidance from the spirit world. We understand our environment to include those we cannot see or touch, the old ones who have gone before us. If you're being led to places on the land, that's our Ancestors walking with us, whispering to us, 'There's medicine over here.' In return, we show our gratitude by offering tobacco or a gift to the land, acknowledging and thanking it for its guidance."

Establishing the knowledge systems so the next generation can access the wisdom of the ages – something she's trying to accomplish by leading medicine walks and workshops at Naturally Dene – is as important for her people's well-being as is conventional health care. And she's advocating for it to be treated as such.

"Our health system should be reflective of the people it serves," she says. "We are a majority here. But our institutions don't recognize our own medicines, our ways of doing. That tells us these institutions don't serve us as Dene. Once our people start accessing land medicines, the knowledge will return."

PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY OF LILA FRASER ERASMUS (PORTRAIT, MUSKEG FLOWERS); DANIKA MCDOWELL (PORTRAIT, ICE CREAM)

Wood (left) forages in the Comox Valley, B.C., for the Sitka spruce buds her company uses in its spruce-tip-flavoured ice cream.

KIRSTEN WOOD / SPRUCE TIPS

At Blue Spruce Ice Cream in Courtenay, B.C., the frosty treat is more than a foodie trend. For owner Kirsten Wood, the signature spruce tip flavour – made from Sitka spruce buds Wood forages from the Comox Valley – is not only a conversation starter, but also a connection to Indigenous food systems.

"The most common question we get when people come in and see spruce tip ice cream is, 'What's that? You can eat spruce tips?' So, we ask them if they want to try it, and pretty much everyone likes it," Wood says.

A potent source of vitamin C, spruce buds have been used by Indigenous people for generations, steeped in tea, dried and even candied. In ice cream, the tips impart a lemony, melon flavour.

"People are so interested in local food right now," Wood says. "Well, local food is Indigenous food. This is a way to help people understand that these local ingredients they're interested in were used by people who were here before, for medicinal purposes and all sorts of things. It's a way to honour that history."

Ice cream might sound like an unconventional way to go about it, but Wood, a citizen of the Saddle Lake Cree Nation on her mother's side, is proud to be forging new paths as an Indigenous business owner. "We're seeing a resurgence of Indigenous role models, especially in food, and that wasn't something that was accessible to us before," she says "Years ago, my grandmother wouldn't have been able to own a business – it wasn't allowed. I didn't have to make this part of my mandate, but this is my identity." ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY OF SHEILA FLAHERTY (PÂTÉ); FRANK REARDON (FLAHERTY)

SHEILA FLAHERTY / SEAL

"Seal is an intrinsic part of being Inuk," says Sheila Flaherty, founder of the Iqaluit-based harvest-to-table culinary tourism venture sijjakkut ("by the seashore" in Inuktitut) and the first Inuk chef to appear on *MasterChef Canada*. "Seal is a source of food. It clothes us – parkas, mitts, pants and boots. It's our whole way of getting nourished and staying warm," she says. "We don't waste any part of an animal. We make use of everything."

Flaherty didn't set out to make food her life's work. In her previous career, she was immersed in Inuit rights, research and policy, and about to enter her first year of law school when she met her husband. Moving to Iqaluit, she started experimenting with Inuit food. One of her first forays was sushi rolls made with Arctic char caught by her husband – who speaks Inuktutit as a first language and grew up on traditional foods in Ausuittuq, the most northerly community in Canada – because she missed the international cuisine that was so readily available in the south. That led to selling sushi rolls on Facebook and a last-minute decision to audition for *MasterChef* the night video submissions were due.

"I got eliminated in the first round, but it showed there's space for someone like myself who focuses on Inuit food. That's where the idea for sijjakkut was birthed."

When she opens the doors to sijjakkut, a planned 4,000-plus square-foot [370-square-metre] facility that will include a teaching kitchen and bed and breakfast, she hopes to promote Inuit traditional practices and knowledge – not only for visitors, but for her community. "My husband has a great thought to fly in elders from different communities to stay at our bed and breakfast and share their knowledge on food preparation. And wouldn't it be also amazing to have cooking classes for Inuit women? We could provide child care and tax vouchers so there are no obstacles."

She also hopes to replicate one of the best experiences she's had as a chef, when she participated in an experimental culinary camp focused entirely on seal in Nuuk, Greenland. "There were five chefs, and we spent eight days in a food lab working with seal meat in new ways. I can't even remember how many types of offerings we prepared. I want to have events like that to celebrate Inuit culture and expand on traditional ways." Z

Flaherty, with a view of Iqaluit behind her; (opposite) Seal pâté prepared by Flaherty at the 2022 annual Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik

TRAVEL

ROMAN CANDLES

After five decades of marriage, **Sandra Martin** crafts a mini travel manifesto to promote harmony

MY HUSBAND ROGER AND I HAVE BEEN TRAVELLING together for more than half a century, and we have no intention of stopping any time soon. What's changed is the way we travel. We have long since traded in our matching backpacks; now I hike with women friends on organized treks, where somebody else arranges lodging and meals, and I bring back travellers' tales to my more sedentary mate.

In what purports to be our golden years, we are more upscale and less frenzied than in our student days, an era when our stomachs grumbled while the price of dinner was calculated by a deep dive into the menus posted outside the restaurants near our cheap lodgings. We have yet to succumb to the lure of cruises, or to strap on our seatbelts in the middle row of our son's SUV to jostle for space between grandkids and dogs, but those days beckon, perhaps sooner than either of us anticipates.

Mostly, I am more demanding and he is more accommodating about destinations. I'm no longer eager to mark significant milestones by hosting a birthday bash for myself in November. The last time I did that, some 25 years ago, there was an unseasonal blizzard the day of the party, and far too much of the birthday girl's time was taken up coping with boots, mittens and hats, all of them dripping with slush.

When I turned 70 five years ago, I opted for the Galapagos Islands, wanting to commune with giant tortoises, shy creatures who can live up to 175 years.

➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, ALEXANDER SPATARI/GETTY IMAGES (ROME SKYLINE); MATTEO COLOMBO/GETTY IMAGES (TREVI FOUNTAIN); FILMPUBLICITYARCHIVE/UNITED ARCHIVES VIA GETTY IMAGES (LA DOLCE VITA)

MARCVS
MATHEUS
IOHS
LVCAS
ISAIAS.PPHA
HIEREMIAS.PPHA

The Basilica of Santa Maria, one of the oldest churches in Rome; Opposite, top: the Colosseum; (below) the Trevi Fountain and (inset) actor Anita Ekberg in the famous fountain scene from Fellini's *La Dolce Vita*

PHOTOGRAPHY, FILIPPO MARIA BIANCHI/GETTY IMAGES (THE BASILICA OF SANTA MARIA IN TRASTEVERE)

Once seriously endangered, the tortoises are now merely threatened due to conservation and captive-breeding programs. Still, trampling on their territory contributes to its environmental degradation, so I knew that I couldn't, in good conscience, repeat that exhilarating trip. Besides, how can you repeat a once-in-a-lifetime experience?

As I was about to turn 75, I plumped for a different kind of trip. I wanted to escape the sagging bookcases in dire need of culling, the closets of clothes I would never wear again, and the overgrown garden. I chose Rome, an ancient city that weirdly I had never visited, although I had been to Italy several times.

My husband had been in Rome in the mid-'60s, travelling solo on a Eurail pass. He can still recall the blond American he met in the streets converging at the base of the Baroque Trevi Fountain. "Whatever happened to her?" he would occasionally speculate with a dreamy expression on his face, as I visualized a voluptuous Anita Ekberg in *La Dolce Vita* prancing under the spray in her low-cut black ball gown, as Marcello Mastroianni raced around the deserted streets searching for a bottle of milk for the mewling kitten she had befriended. Who knows and who cares, was my view, although I did ask my husband if he had tossed a coin in the water, because, according to legend, that meant he would make a return visit to Rome. If not now, then when, I asked. And so we made plans for a two-week trip to the Italian capital in October, when it would be warm rather than hot, and crowded but not bulging with tourists.

Before we left home, we agreed to adhere to my newly formulated three-point manifesto. It was my birthday after all.

1 The days are long gone when we were wild and crazy kids who thought mortgages were boring, children were not on the radar, and schedules were for old people like our parents. We hit the nadir of spontaneity on our honeymoon, when we arrived in Paris and wandered the streets trying to find a cheap hotel. Everybody books ahead now, including us.

Roger usually organizes accommodation, but I wanted more than the best deal in a hotel near the train station. Sure, I longed to see the Colosseum, the Pantheon and the Sistine Chapel, but I wanted to stay in a neighbourhood, walk its streets, dine in local eateries, drop into churches and spend time in cafés and parks, absorbing the atmosphere.

After consulting some well-travelled Italian friends, I pushed for a Vrbo apartment in Trastevere, an ancient neighbourhood of narrow winding streets, churches (including a shrine to the Christian martyr Santa Cecilia), the city's oldest synagogue and dozens of trattorias. Once a working-class district and now considered "Bohemian," it was precisely the sort of urban village I craved. We stayed a couple of blocks north of the main drag, so it was quiet at night, and spent our days wandering into museums, a church where a wedding was being celebrated and a botanical garden that once was part of the estate of Queen Christina of Sweden, who had settled in Rome in the 17th century after converting to Catholicism and abdicating the throne. There were plenty of patios in Trastevere where we could sip a cappuccino, if only before 11 a.m., and even an open-air market where we bought fruit, cheese and bread for breakfast.

I had another reason for wanting to stay in the relative quiet of that neighbourhood. I had had a mishap in late August at a friend's cottage when my right shin had inadvertently become wedged between a motorboat and the dock, raising an impressive hematoma and causing annoying muscle spasms in my right leg. Cancelling the trip was not an option, but I did consult my doctor as a precaution. She prescribed anti-inflammatories, physio, compression stockings and a cane for extra support on cobblestones. As I was hobbling out of her office, she quipped: "Well, you won't be climbing the Spanish Steps," referring to the 18th-century marble stairway leading down from the Piazza Trinita dei Monti, near the house where the poet John Keats lived, to the ultra-chic shopping district of the Via Condotti. She got that right, but I must admit the cane caught the attention of flight attendants who offered me priority boarding, and museum personnel who directed me to staff elevators so I wouldn't have to climb daunting staircases.

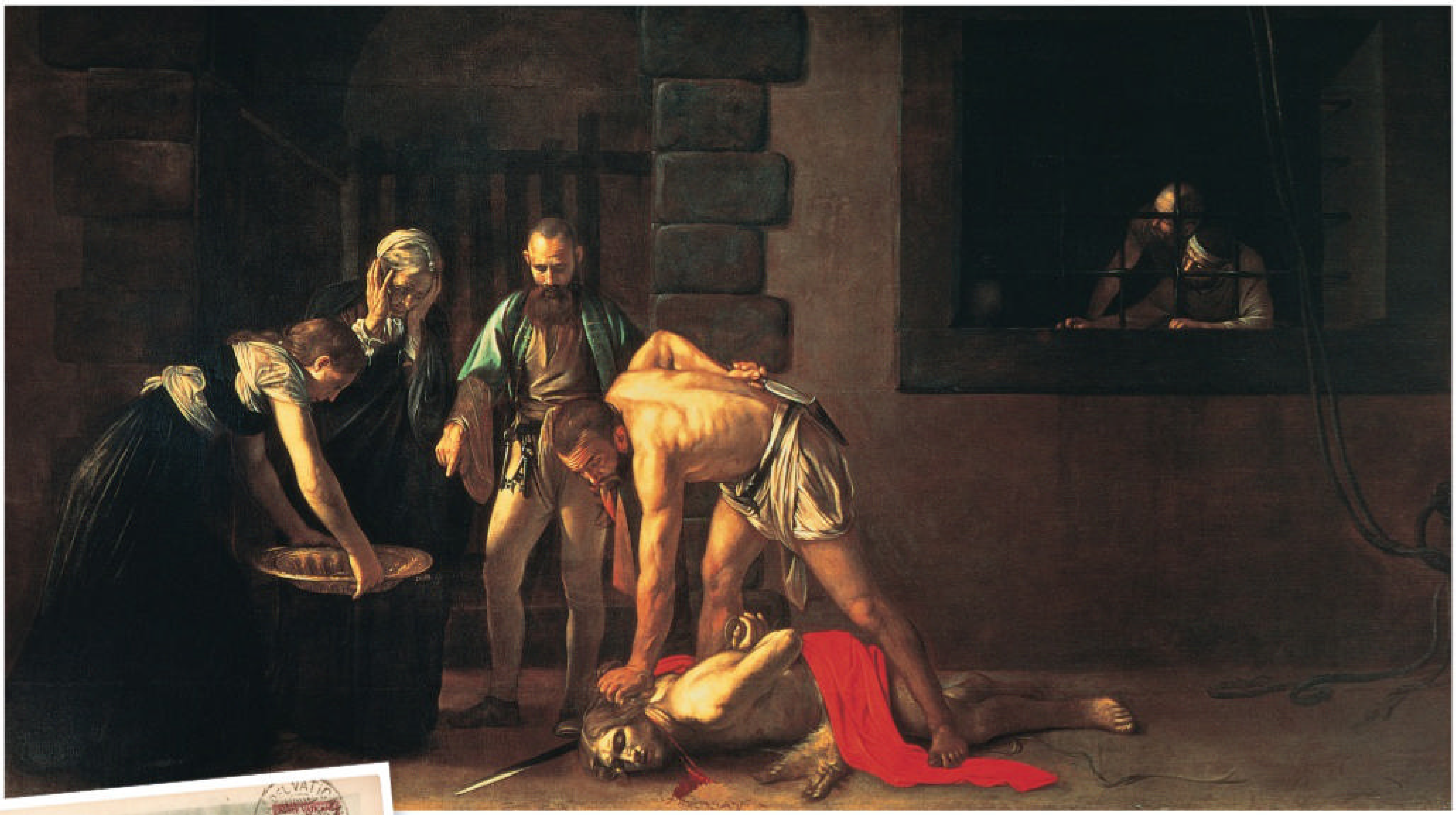
2 My husband loves being behind the wheel; I, not so much. Even contemplating driving in Rome, a city of more than four million people, built around seven hills, ancient pathways and culs-de-sac, gave me hives. As a person whose middle name could be Vertigo, I had already driven with him along the perilous Amalfi Coast on a holiday best forgotten in a rented car with a slipping clutch. Besides, if he is driving, I am the navigator, especially if the car doesn't have GPS. Forget modern navigational devices, how many men do you know who trust Siri, or whatever she calls herself nowadays, to tell them where to go? Exactly.

I still tremble at the memory, dating before we had children, when we were driving through St. Andrews in Scotland, which is known as much for its stone architecture as its golf links. We were short of time, although I can't remember why, so I was supposed to read out the de- ➤

PHOTOGRAPHY, ALEXANDER SPATARI/GETTY IMAGES (PASTA AMATRICIANA)

Top: The former residence of Queen Christina of Sweden (top) now comprises Rome's Botanical Garden; the Fountain of the Tritons (middle) was added to the garden in the 18th century; an old street (bottom) in the Trastevere neighbourhood of Rome; opposite: Pasta Amatriciana, a traditional dish

PHOTOGRAPHY, THE PICTURE ART COLLECTION/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (QUEEN CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN); SKLIFAS STEVEN/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (FOUNTAIN OF THE TRITONS); VWALAKTE/GETTY IMAGES (TRASTEVERE)



Roma – S. Pietro

scriptions of each building from a guidebook as my husband drove down a historic street. Our coordination was off, frustration ensued, tempers flared, and we ended up trying to split our travellers' cheques so we could go our separate ways. Alas, they were all in his name, so here we are, still together.

Wiser, at least in some respects, we agreed that if we wanted to make a day trip to visit the excavations at Pompeii, some 240 kilometres away, we would swallow our pride and climb aboard an oldies tour bus. In fact, there was so much to see in Rome that we put Pompeii on the list for next time.

3 No more than two museums a day. In the old days, we tried to cram in too much, so it became a blur. After more than 50 years, we have developed a highly refined bartering system. Nothing is excluded, but each of us must indulge the other, at least some of the time.

My husband, a historian, loves war museums and battlefields, while I prefer portrait galleries, gardens and the abodes of literary and artistic heroes. Our compromise – one of each, every three days – had the unexpected consequence of broadening our appetites for each other's preferences.

I now look forward to the *de rigeur* visit to the Imperial War Museum in London; we both eagerly visit arcane residences such as Leon Trotsky's house in Mexico City, where he was murdered by one of Stalin's henchmen; and Leo Tolstoy's last residence in Moscow, which still looks as it did when the great novelist fled on a winter's night to escape his wife's tirades, only to die of pneumonia, a day's journey away in a remote train station.

Our trip to Rome already included a three-day respite from sightseeing, because we had planned an excursion to nearby Malta to visit an ailing friend. While we were in the capital, Valletta, we went to the 16th-century Catholic cathedral dedicated to Saint John the Baptist and refreshed our fascination with the Italian master Michelangelo Merisi. Better known as Caravaggio, he used light and shadow to create intimate, often religious, portraits depicting mayhem and torture as well as exquisite moments of introspection. We had seen his paintings on earlier trips to Sicily and Malta, but being transfixed once again by his "Beheading of St. John the Baptist" in Valletta had persuaded us that Caravaggio should become the sub-theme of our Italian sojourn. The dramatic painting of the violent death of Saint John is off centre, so the casual observers leaning out a window of a cell on the right side of the canvas can see the killing. Are they meant to represent the viewer, or are they, as some scholars, including celebrated art critic Michael Fried, have suggested, prisoners anticipating their own grisly deaths? However, you interpret the painting, it combines a dynamic depth of physical and psychological drama. Seeing many of Caravaggio's paintings close-up – there are 26 in Rome – was the impetus behind every church and gallery we visited on the remainder of our trip. I came home invigorated, if still limping.

Slowing down, as it always seems to do, gave me the intellectual solitude to contemplate what might come next, including a return visit to Rome, because now I too have tossed a coin in the Trevi Fountain. Z

PHOTOGRAPHY, MONDADORI PORTFOLIO/GETTY IMAGES (BEHEADING OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST); LILIGRAPHIE/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO (POSTCARD)

The shoreline of Valletta, Malta; Oppposite top: “Beheading of St. John the Baptist,” by Caravaggio hangs in Valletta’s cathedral; opposite inset: a postcard of St. Peter’s Basilica from the ’30s

PHOTOGRAPHY, KYLE SCHEMBRI/EYEEM/GETTY IMAGES (VALLETTA, MALTA)

BRAIN GAMES #89

MENU FOR MATHEMATICIANS

// BY BARBARA OLSON //

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	■	7	8	9	10	11	12	■
13			14				■	15						■
16							■	17						■
18							19	■	20			■	■	■
21				■	22			23		■	■	24	25	26
■	■	■	27	28		■	29			30	31			
32	33	34	■	35		36			■	37				
38			39				■	40	41					
42					■	43	44				■	45		
46					47			■	48		49	■	■	■
50			■	■	51			52		■	53	54	55	56
■	■	■	57	58		■	59			60				
■	61	62				63	■	64						
■	65						■	66						
■	67						■	68			■	69		

ACROSS

1 Dernier ___ (latest style)
4 Beauty spot?
7 Atop + charged particles
13 Portable lamp
15 Tiny tot
16 Where to visit London and Paris
17 Totes cute
18 Mangy mutt + angry tirades
20 Some hot rods
21 BTS genre
22 Back comb
24 Cry accompanying a forehead slap
27 ___ Paulo
29 Kate's *Titanic* role + Maia's *The Passion of the Christ* role
32 Racecar fuel additive
35 ___ *Miller* (Verdi opera)
37 One-named "Royals" singer
38 Auto + turns to compost
40 Low-heeled shoe + relatives
42 They turn blue litmus paper red
43 Comedy soccer coach Ted
45 Red, Black or Yellow body
46 Male cat + first letter + tootsies
48 Blended levy in P.E.I.
50 Saskatoon-Regina dir.
51 Vampire slaying weapon
53 "... bird, ___ plane, ...!"
57 Computer user's panic button
59 Golf average + scissor cuts
61 Open up to a doctor?
64 Boo-hoo-hoo types
65 Powerful gun lobby
66 Trivial ___
67 "Cool!" + "or so"
68 Took a course?
69 Family viewing ratings

DOWN

1 It gives you the time of day
2 Quickly accumulated, as costs
3 Blurb before, for short
4 Will be: Fr.
5 Hard copy
6 "La, ___ to follow sew"
7 Sicilian's sixty minutes
8 Elbow jabs
9 Sonny and Cher's "___ You Babe"
10 Hockey's Bobby, and family
11 Cuff or collar
12 Toronto's King and Queen: Abbr.
14 Winter coats for boats
19 Virus in 2003 news
23 Shows originally named for their commercials
24 Laundry sorter's pile
25 "It's do ___"
26 Canine cackler
28 Be ___ cause (have no hope)
30 *St. ___ Fire* (coming-of-age movie)
31 Disheveled do
32 Sings à la Ella
33 Stuffed shells
34 Apply a base coat
36 Speck on an ocean map
39 Suggested qty., on a label
41 Show to the door
44 Posthaste, for short
47 Katharine Hepburn's collection
49 Paint-mixing squirts
52 Letter between iota and lambda
54 Hog, as a phone line
55 Bit of parsley
56 Tool passers, say
57 Observed with suspicion
58 Prefix with "Flush" or "flo"
60 Without a doubt
61 Bering or Bosporus: Abbr.
62 Word of enlightenment
63 "As if!"

SUDOKU

	3		8		1	6		5
		4	7	2				
1		8			4			
			5		9	7		1
			1	8	6			
4		6	2		7			
			4			8		6
				7	3	2		
6		7	9		8		1	

FOR ANSWERS, TURN TO PAGE 94

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I know there’s
no leakage”
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always discreet

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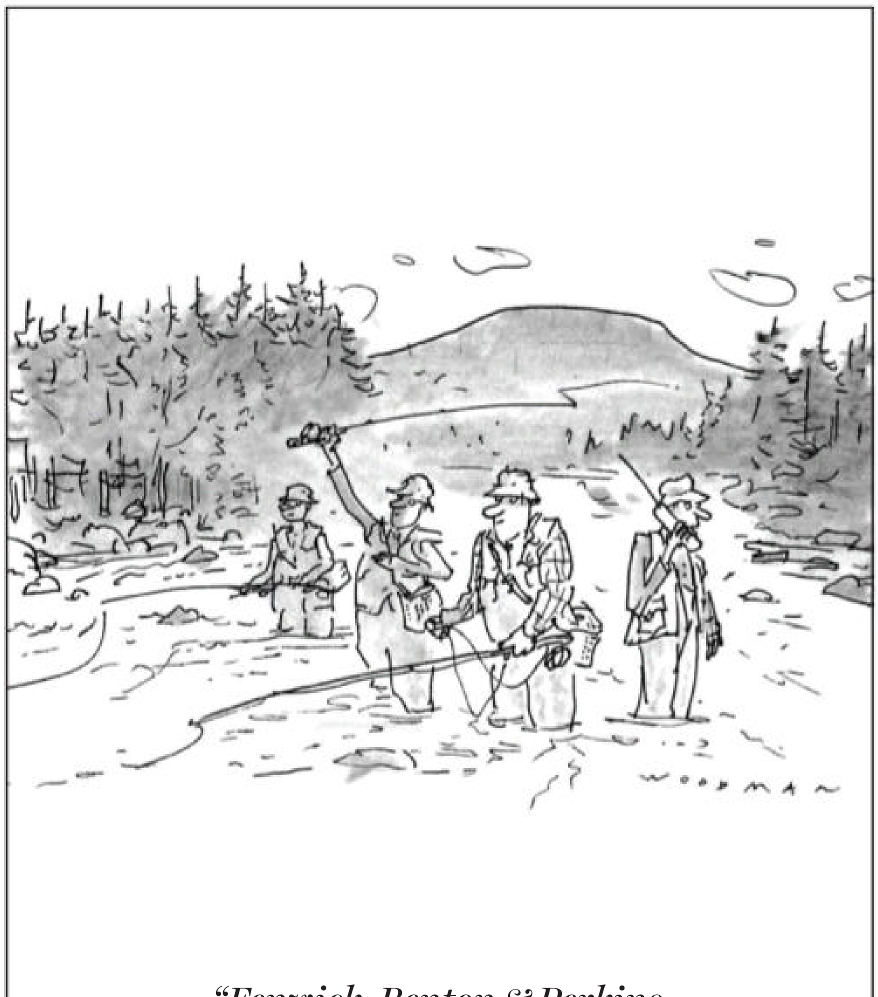
ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD (PG. 92)

1 C	2 R	3 I	■	4 S	5 P	6 A	■	7 O	8 N	9 I	10 O	11 N	12 S	■
13 L	A	N	14 T	E	R	N	■	15 R	U	G	R	A	T	■
16 O	N	T	A	R	I	O	■	17 A	D	O	R	B	S	■
18 C	U	R	R	A	N	T	19 S	■	20 G	T	S	■	■	■
21 K	P	O	P	■	22 T	E	A	23 S	E	■	■	24 D	25 O	26 H
■	■	■	27 S	28 A	O	■	29 R	O	S	30 E	31 M	A	R	Y
32 S	33 T	34 P	■	35 L	U	36 I	S	A	■	37 L	O	R	D	E
38 C	A	R	39 R	O	T	S	■	40 P	41 U	M	P	K	I	N
42 A	C	I	D	S	■	43 L	44 A	S	S	O	■	45 S	E	A
46 T	O	M	A	T	47 O	E	S	■	48 H	S	49 T	■	■	■
50 S	S	E	■	■	51 S	T	A	52 K	E	■	53 I	54 T	55 S	56 A
■	■	■	57 E	58 S	C	■	59 P	A	R	60 S	N	I	P	S
■	61 S	62 A	Y	A	A	63 H	■	64 P	O	U	T	E	R	S
■	65 T	H	E	N	R	A	■	66 P	U	R	S	U	I	T
■	67 R	A	D	I	S	H	■	68 A	T	E	■	69 P	G	S

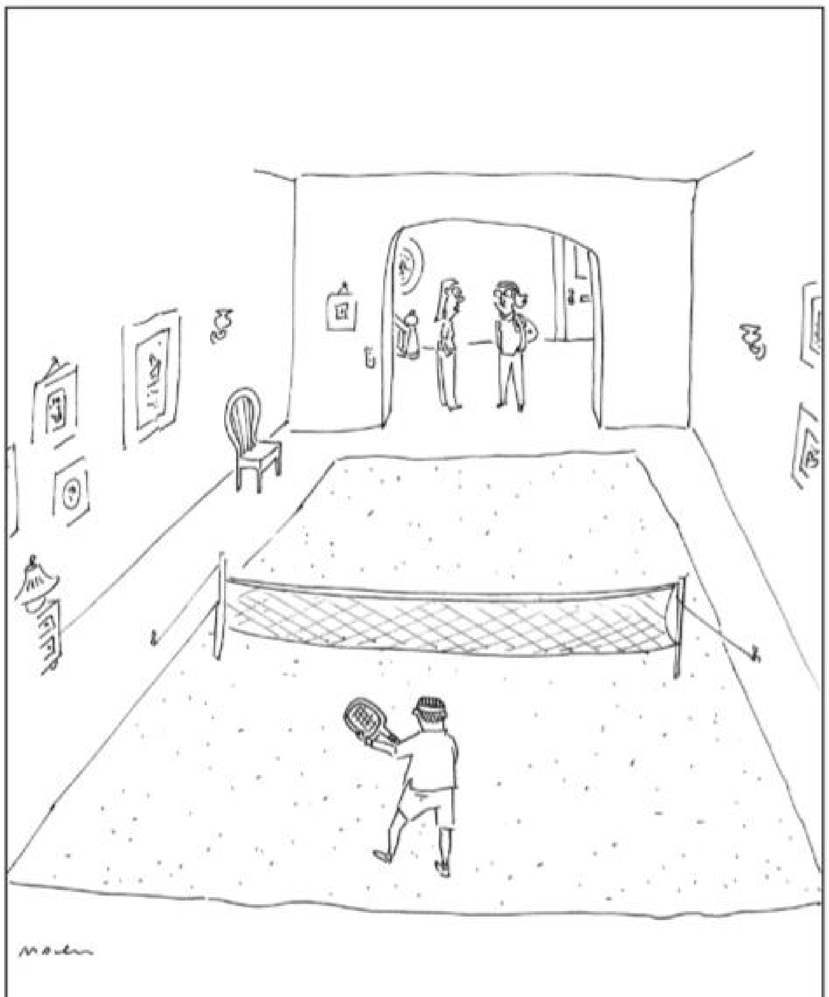
ANSWERS TO SUDOKU (PG. 92)

7	3	2	8	9	1	6	4	5
9	6	4	7	2	5	1	8	3
1	5	8	3	6	4	9	2	7
2	8	3	5	4	9	7	6	1
5	7	9	1	8	6	4	3	2
4	1	6	2	3	7	5	9	8
3	9	5	4	1	2	8	7	6
8	4	1	6	7	3	2	5	9
6	2	7	9	5	8	3	1	4

Zoomerang



"Fenwick, Benton & Perkins. How may I direct your call?"



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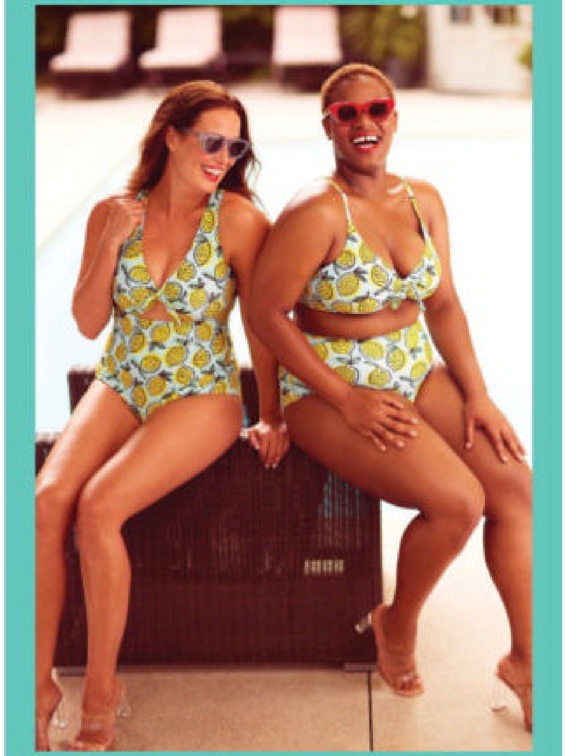

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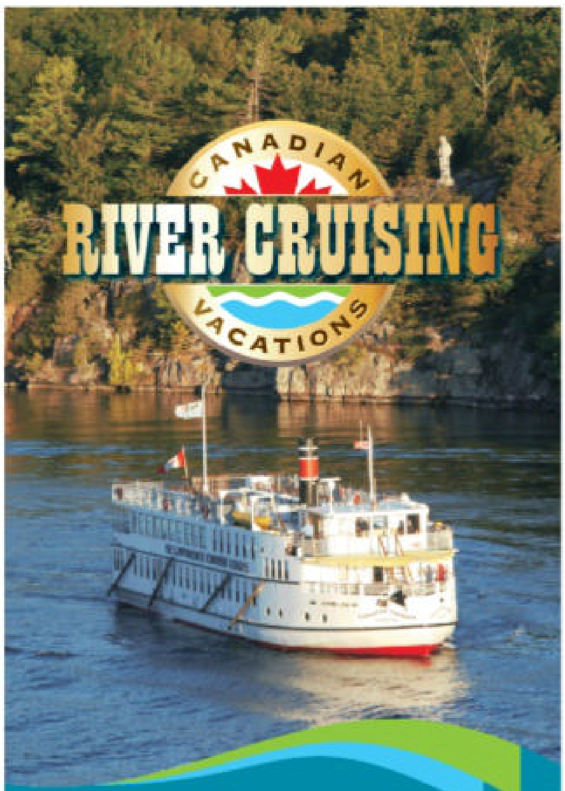

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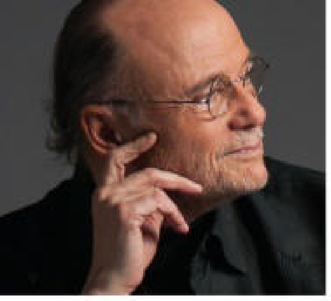

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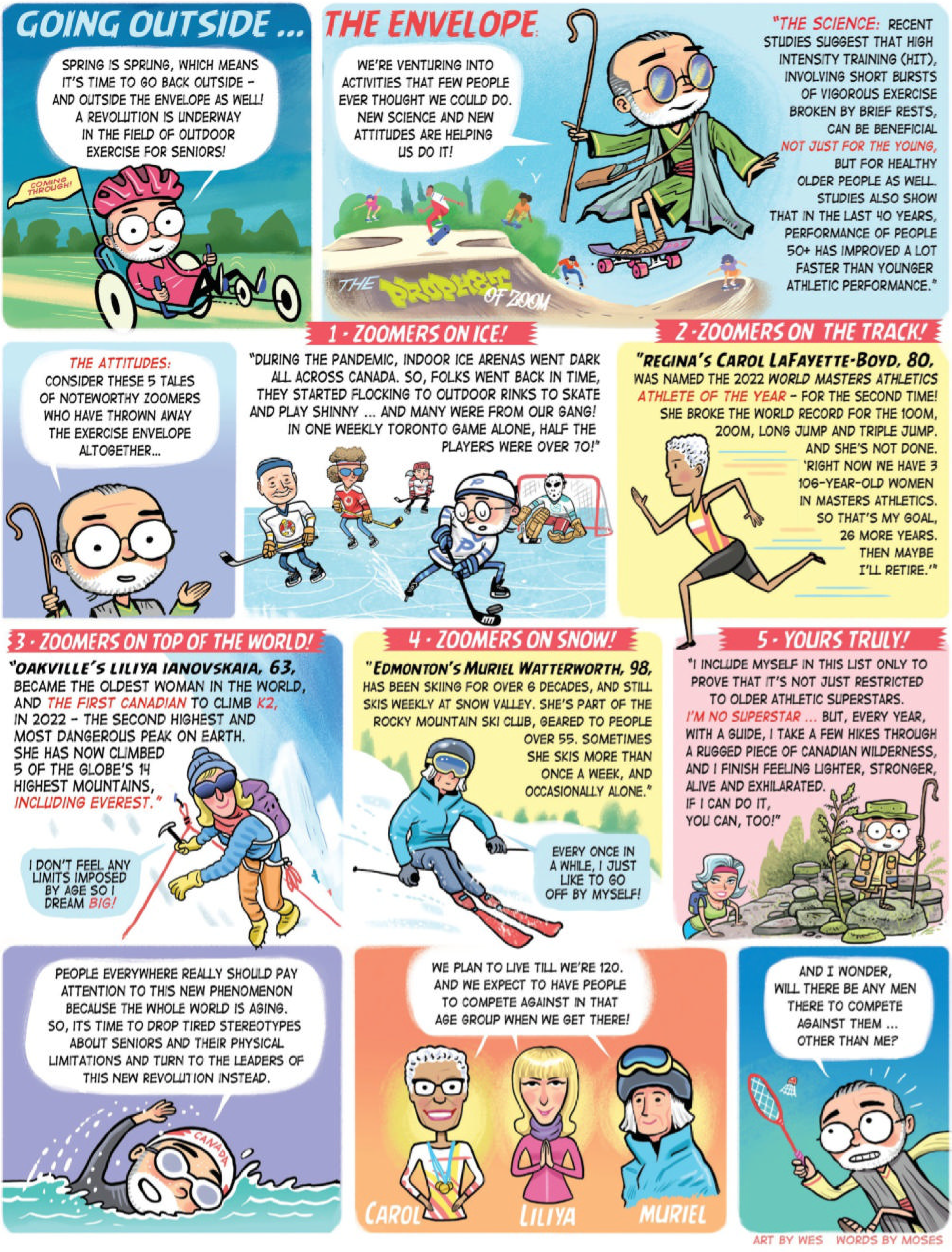
GOING OUTSIDE ...
SPRING IS SPRUNG, WHICH MEANS IT'S TIME TO GO BACK OUTSIDE – AND OUTSIDE THE ENVELOPE AS WELL! A REVOLUTION IS UNDERWAY IN THE FIELD OF OUTDOOR EXERCISE FOR SENIORS!
COMING THROUGH!
THE ENVELOPE
WE'RE VENTURING INTO ACTIVITIES THAT FEW PEOPLE EVER THOUGHT WE COULD DO. NEW SCIENCE AND NEW ATTITUDES ARE HELPING US DO IT!
"THE SCIENCE: RECENT STUDIES SUGGEST THAT HIGH INTENSITY TRAINING (HIT), INVOLVING SHORT BURSTS OF VIGOROUS EXERCISE BROKEN BY BRIEF RESTS, CAN BE BENEFICIAL NOT JUST FOR THE YOUNG, BUT FOR HEALTHY OLDER PEOPLE AS WELL. STUDIES ALSO SHOW THAT IN THE LAST 40 YEARS, PERFORMANCE OF PEOPLE 50+ HAS IMPROVED A LOT FASTER THAN YOUNGER ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE."
THE PROPHET OF ZOOM
THE ATTITUDES: CONSIDER THESE 5 TALES OF NOTEWORTHY ZOOMERS WHO HAVE THROWN AWAY THE EXERCISE ENVELOPE ALTOGETHER...
1 · ZOOMERS ON ICE!
"DURING THE PANDEMIC, INDOOR ICE ARENAS WENT DARK ALL ACROSS CANADA. SO, FOLKS WENT BACK IN TIME, THEY STARTED FLOCKING TO OUTDOOR RINKS TO SKATE AND PLAY SHINNY ... AND MANY WERE FROM OUR GANG! IN ONE WEEKLY TORONTO GAME ALONE, HALF THE PLAYERS WERE OVER 70!"
2 · ZOOMERS ON THE TRACK!
"REGINA'S CAROL LAFAYETTE-BOYD, 80, WAS NAMED THE 2022 WORLD MASTERS ATHLETICS ATHLETE OF THE YEAR – FOR THE SECOND TIME! SHE BROKE THE WORLD RECORD FOR THE 100M, 200M, LONG JUMP AND TRIPLE JUMP. AND SHE'S NOT DONE. 'RIGHT NOW WE HAVE 3 106-YEAR-OLD WOMEN IN MASTERS ATHLETICS. SO THAT'S MY GOAL, 26 MORE YEARS. THEN MAYBE I'LL RETIRE.'"
3 · ZOOMERS ON TOP OF THE WORLD!
"OAKVILLE'S LILIYA IANOVSKAIA, 63, BECAME THE OLDEST WOMAN IN THE WORLD, AND THE FIRST CANADIAN TO CLIMB K2, IN 2022 – THE SECOND HIGHEST AND MOST DANGEROUS PEAK ON EARTH. SHE HAS NOW CLIMBED 5 OF THE GLOBE'S 14 HIGHEST MOUNTAINS, INCLUDING EVEREST."
I DON'T FEEL ANY LIMITS IMPOSED BY AGE SO I DREAM BIG!
4 · ZOOMERS ON SNOW!
"EDMONTON'S MURIEL WATTERWORTH, 98, HAS BEEN SKIING FOR OVER 6 DECADES, AND STILL SKIS WEEKLY AT SNOW VALLEY. SHE'S PART OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN SKI CLUB, GEARED TO PEOPLE OVER 55. SOMETIMES SHE SKIS MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK, AND OCCASIONALLY ALONE."
EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, I JUST LIKE TO GO OFF BY MYSELF!
5 · YOURS TRULY!
"I INCLUDE MYSELF IN THIS LIST ONLY TO PROVE THAT IT'S NOT JUST RESTRICTED TO OLDER ATHLETIC SUPERSTARS. I'M NO SUPERSTAR ... BUT, EVERY YEAR, WITH A GUIDE, I TAKE A FEW HIKES THROUGH A RUGGED PIECE OF CANADIAN WILDERNESS, AND I FINISH FEELING LIGHTER, STRONGER, ALIVE AND EXHILARATED. IF I CAN DO IT, YOU CAN, TOO!"
PEOPLE EVERYWHERE REALLY SHOULD PAY ATTENTION TO THIS NEW PHENOMENON BECAUSE THE WHOLE WORLD IS AGING. SO, ITS TIME TO DROP TIRED STEREOTYPES ABOUT SENIORS AND THEIR PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS AND TURN TO THE LEADERS OF THIS NEW REVOLUTION INSTEAD.
CANADA
WE PLAN TO LIVE TILL WE'RE 120. AND WE EXPECT TO HAVE PEOPLE TO COMPETE AGAINST IN THAT AGE GROUP WHEN WE GET THERE!
CAROL
LILIYA
MURIEL
AND I WONDER, WILL THERE BE ANY MEN THERE TO COMPETE AGAINST THEM ... OTHER THAN ME?
ART BY WES WORDS BY MOSES

PHOTOGRAPHY, DON DIXON; ILLUSTRATION, WES TYRELL

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